STATUS AND ROLE OF PRIME MINISTERS UNDER THE MUGHALS (1526 - 1707)

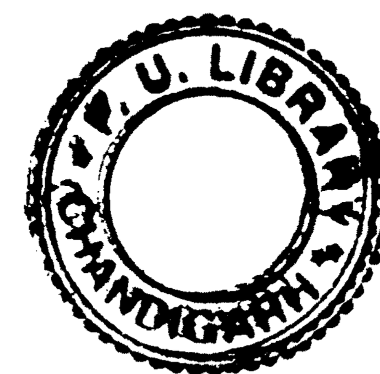
A Thesis

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Mansabs granted to important Prime Ministers by Mughal Emperors.

ABBREVIATIONS USED :

O.U.P.	:	Oxford University Press
C.U.P.	:	Cambridge University Press
I.H.R.	:	Indian Historical Review
P.I.H.C.	:	Proceedings Indian History Congress
J.I.H.	:	Journal of Indian History
Q.R.H.S.	:	Quarterly Review of Historical Studies
I.C.H.R.	:	Indian Council of Historical Research

PREFACE

The establishment of Turkish rule in India saw the development of the Persian tradition of historiography which in early medieval period consisted of writing about the political achievements and military exploits of kings and the nobility. Although recent trends in medieval Indian history have centred around a multidimensional research, with a gradual shift from biographical, political and military themes to cultural, economic and institutional ones, the trend by no means is suggestive of having exhausted studies and research on different aspects of polity.

Since the history of medieval India is to some extent the record of the achievements and failures of the nobility, this institution has also attracted the attention of scholars, as is proved by important works on nobility as an institution. Athar Ali's *Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb* (1966); S.B.P. Nigam's, Nobility under the Sultans of Delhi (1968); Narain Singh Yadav's *Hindu Nobility under Akbar* (1973) Pritpal Singh Bedi's *Mughal Nobility under Akbar* (1985); *Afzal Hussain's The Nobility under Akbar and Jahangir – A study of Family Groups* (1990); and the recent Firdoz Anwar's *Nobility under the Mughals,* 1628-58 (2001) are some important works on this institution.

Specific aspects of the nobility like the *Wizarat* have also attracted scholarly research. Ibn Hasan's, *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire* (1936), analyses the position of the *Vakil* and the *Wazir* in medieval India in general and that of Mughals in particular. R.P. Tripathi also discusses the office of *Wazir* at length in *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration* (1964).

The office of the Prime Minister has always been very significant in the political history of any country. In the administrative setup which gradually developed after the establishment of Turkish rule in India, the

Wazir or Prime Minister always occupied a central place. As the chief counsellor and an instrument for the execution of his policies, the *Wazir/ Vakil* exercised considerable influence on the political decisions of that time.

I would like to concede that the Mughal *Wazir* cannot be equated with the Prime Minister in the present context. Technically speaking it would be misleading to call him the Prime Minister but in the absence of a better equivalent in English language for the official who was the premier noble and the highest official in the administrative hierarchy (referred to as Prime Minister by several scholars) it seems appropriate for the period under review. Even under the Marathas, the 'Peshwa' who was the king's senior most officer had been termed as the Prime Minister. Moreover, during the Mughal period the office has not been known by a common nomenclature. The *Vakil-us-Sultanat,* the premier noble under Akbar, disappeared as an administrative office once Akbar reorganized the political setup with the creation of the office of *Diwan/ Wazir* in 1564 A.D. and was only retained as an honorific one. The office remained in abeyance during most of Jahangir's reign as well as that of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb when the *Wazir* held supreme charge.

There appears to be a direct relationship between the functions of *Wazir* and *Vakil* throughout 1526-1707 A.D. When the office of Vakil was in use the *Wazir/Diwan* looked after finance. When there was no *Vakil,* the *Wazir* supervised general administration as well as finance and was the premier noble. Therefore, with very few exceptions, the medieval synonym for the Prime Minister represents only the first among equals and is the generally accepted term for the medley of terms like the *Wazir, Vakil, Diwan, Diwan-i-Ala, Diwan Wazir* which were used for the senior-most noble under different Mughal emperors.

Considering the importance of the office in medieval polity, which is proved by its historical continuity notwithstanding the change in nomenclalture, scholars have taken up research on individual prime ministers. Munshi Debi Prasad Kayastha's *Khan-i-Khanan Nama* (1860) in Urdu is a biographical depiction of Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan, Iqtidar Alam Khan's *Political Biography of a Mughal Noble, Munim Khan, Khan-i-Khanan* 1497-1575 (1969). Jagdish Narayan Sarkar's. *The life of Mir Jumla - The General of Aurangzeb* (1979) and Sukumar Ray's *Bairam Khan* (1992) are some of the important works. However Laiq Ahmad was the first to undertake a study of prime ministers under an individual monarch. His work, *Prime Ministers of Aurangzeb* (1976), is a biographical account of the *Wazirs* who served the last of the great Mughals. To the best of my knowledge no comprehensive research work on the status and role of prime ministers under the Mughals has been attempted so far.

The present research although related to the institution of prime minister under the Mughals is different in its perspective and line of treatment. I have tried to assess the varying status of the senior-most official after the emperor, as well as the contribution of the important incumbents of the office in providing assistance to the monarch in not only expanding the territorial limits of the empire which happened to be the primary concern of Mughal emperors but also providing it with strength through the sound economic reforms undertaken by them. My research also focuses on the extent to which they left their mark on the social, literary and cultural life of the age, by way of personal examples, the patronage provided to craftsmen and the infrastructural input needed for such endeavours, neutralising the belief that the nobility's role in matters other than political was only peripheral.

I am grateful to Late Dr. R.C. Jauhri, former Professor and Head of the Department of History, Panjab University, Chandigarh for having

suggested the theme to me years ago, while I was undertaking my M.Phil dissertation on 'Prime Ministers of Akbar' under his supervision.

I am indebted to Dr. Kiran Pawar, Professor, Department of History, Panjab University, Chandigarh for taking keen interest in the preparation of my work and having painstakingly guided me throughout with care and thoroughness. Her help, affection and genuine concern were always forthcoming at every stage of my work.

I owe special thanks to Dr. Surinder Singh, Professor and Chairperson of the Department of History, Panjab University, Chandigarh for having helped me from time to time with suggestions on source material.

I am appreciative of the help and cooperation I got from the staff of various libraries where I went for collection of research material, namely, the National Archives, New Delhi; the Uttar Pradesh State Archives, Lucknow; the A.C. Joshi Library, Panjab University, Chandigarh; the Dwarka Das Library, Chandigarh. I am indebted to the staff of the D.A.V. College Library, Chandigarh who made available some contemporary sources to me.

I would like to thank Dr. Madhukar Arya, Department of Persian, Panjab University, Chandigarh for having helped me with translation of some Persian documents. I would be failing in my duty if I do not acknowledge the help I received from Mr. J. Gandhi for giving the thesis its final shape by his neat computer typing.

Finally, I must place on record my gratitude to my family whose encouragement and cooperation helped me to venture into the field of historical research.

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Chapter – II

THE INSTITUTION OF WIZARAT* UNDER THE MUGHALS

The Mughal emperors were pivots of their government and kept all strings of administration in their hands, yet it was impossible for them to rule their vast kingdom single handedly.[1] They had inherited a legacy of complex traditions and mixed conventions and developed their own theory of kingship. The administrative setup established by them was unique in the sense that it was not completely divorced from the past and took the neo-political trends into account as well.

The creation of a strong nobility was one of the most significant achievements of the Mughal emperors. The functioning of the administrative set up, the discharge of political and military duties by the state, and the maintenance of social standards, all depended on the proper working of the institution of nobility.[2]

The evolution of the Mughal nobility as an institution was the result of a long process of historical growth. Its roots can be traced back to political and economic progress in West Asia under Islam, as well as the peculiar socio-economic conditions of India. The perceptions

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* *The Term used for the king's counsellor and head of administrative setup (Prime Minister) under the Sultanat of Delhi was Wazir. Under Akbar, the highest office in the empire was that of "Vakil-us-Sultanat". There were times when the offices of the Vakil and Wazir Coexisted. When the office of Vakil was in use, the Wazir looked after finance but in his absence (under Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb) it was the Wazir/Diwan who looked after finance as well as general administration and was the premier noble and Emperor's counsellor.*

1 I.H. Qureshi, The Administration of the Mughal Empire, Low Price Pub.,Delhi, 2002, p. 70.

2 Satish Chandra, Parties and Politics of the Mughal Court, 1707-1740, O.U.P., 2002, p.1.

of the Sultans in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and the traditions that the Mughal rulers had inherited from their turko-mongol backround also contributed to its evolution.[1]

The nobility, that generally implied a class of persons who were officers of the king as well as a superior class in the political ranking, possessed special administrative and political status.[2] The Mughal emperor and the nobility, the two essential components of the governing class were dependent on one another and it was this element of interdependence between the two that led to an internal cohesion that was responsible for the rise of a strong centralized state under the Mughals.[3] Although the nobility was the creation of the emperor, it was also the sole apparatus to execute his policies and implement his schemes. This explains the element of interdependence between the Mughal emperors and the Umara.[4]

The *Wazir* who was the leader of the nobility occupied a place of prime importance in Mughal polity. His status and responsibilities varied from time to time, depending on the contemporary environment, the aptitude of the monarch and the exigency of the situation. Infact the *Wazir* was an inseparable adjunct of the monarch. He was his chief counsellor, mouthpiece and the main instrument for the execution of his policies and orders.

The seniormost official under the Mughals, who has been often called Prime Minister held different titles like *Vakil, Vakil-us-Sultanat, Wazir, Diwan, Diwan-i-Ala* and *Diwan Wazir* under different Mughal

1 Satish Chandra, Parties and Politics of the Mughal Count, 1707-1740, O.U.P., 2002, p.2.

2 Athar Ali, The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1997, p. 2.

3 Firdoz Anwar, "Implementation of Escheat Under Shah Jahan, Some Implications," P.I.H.C., 52nd Sesion, New Delhi, 1992, p.243.

4 Firdoz Anwar, "Participation of the Mughal Umara in some Central Administrative Positions," (1628-58). I.H.R. ,Vol. XXV, p. 1.

emperors and one cannot deny his being the emperor's lieutenant in all matters. The significance attached to the post and its historical continuity, barring the times when the office was kept in abeyance, added to its importance.[1]

There is evidence that the office existed even under Changiz Khan whose *Wazir* is said to have exercised enormous influence and was consulted on every important issue and even served under the Khan's son Ogotai.[2]

Timur, the great Turkish conqueror and the other ancestor of Babur, whose legacy to the Mughal emperors by way of political institutions is as conspicuous as that of Changiz Khan, also realized the need of a council of ministers for the smooth running of the administration.[3] It is apparent from the *Malfuzat-i-Timuri* that in the graded aristocracy of Timur, the highest officer in civil affairs was the Prime Minister known as *Diwani-Ala* or *Wazir* and "the two posts were synonymous and the distinction between *Diwan* and *Wazir* existing in the Ottoman Empire was not found in Timur's domain.[4] Although a system of checks and balances, for which Akbar is much acclaimed, existed at all levels during Timur's time whose political maxims included the saying "Too great a share of government should be trusted to none",[5] he held his *Wazir* in high esteem and regarded him as the most respected and confidential servant of the royalty. According to the traditions preserved in the *Malfuzat-i-Timuri*, Timur contemplated

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1 During the period of 97 years (1560 – 1657) there were ten Vakils, and they covered in all about 39 years. Of these very often the *Diwan* replaced the *vakil* and functioned as the premier noble of the Mughal Court, and the senior most in the official hierarchy performing the duties of the *Wazir*, in Ibn Hasan, Central Structure of the Mughal Empire, p. 140.

2 Ralph Fox, Genghis Khan, John Lane, Bodley Head, London, 1936, p. 151.

3 Sharfuddin Ali Yazdi, Zafarnama, Eng.trans, Major Davy, as Political and Military Institutes of Tamerlane, Idarah-i- Adabiyat-i-Delli, New Delhi, 1972, p.69.

4 Mansura Haider, "Timur's Methods of Administration", P.I.H.C., 1977, p. 701.

5 Major Davy, Political and Military Institutes of Tamerlane, p. 72.

seven *Wazirs* working under a Prime Minister *Diwan*begi. Of those the *Waziri Mamlukat,* the *Waziri Sayar,* the *Waziri Sipah* and *Waziri Karkhana* appear to have had some connection with financial affairs.

Before the conquest of India, Babur was not in a position to organize a nobility fully disciplined and subservient to him[1] and the nobles who remained with him were treated more as associates. His arrival in India saw the revival of the *Wizarat* but its character was as indefinite and powers as widespread as in the days of the early Turks. In his sporadic life Babur had perhaps little time to further the process of evolution of the institution of *Wizarat.*[2]

Under Babur, there are several references to the *Diwan,* a term synonymous with *Wazir.* As early as 1494 A.D., when Babur ascended the throne, the term seems to be in usage as he appointed Hasan Yaqub to the government of Andyan and also made him the master of household, i.e., the Prime Minister.[3] However, the most important person who held this office and became Babur's chief advisor was Baqi Chagniani. He exercised great influence over Babur and was his right hand man.[4] As Babur's chief counsellor Baqi had virtually assumed the role of *Wazir* and was assigned the transit duties as well as collection of property tax from large mountaneous areas.[5] No man enjoyed higher

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1 One of Babur's Begs is reported to have adopted royal airs, holding receptions and public court after the fashion of Sultans. Another of his Begs had a kettledrum beaten at his own gate, notwithstanding his acknowledging Babur as Padshah. Baburnama Eng.trans. A.S. Beveridge Vol. I pp. 119, 249-50; Iqtidar Alam, "The Turko Mongol Theory of Kingship", Medieval India - A Miscellany II, pp. 8-18; Afzal Hussain, The Nobility under Akbar and Jahangir : A Study of family groups, Manohar, 1999, p. 7.

2 Babur, Baburnama, Vol. I, p. 281; Laiq Ahmad, The Prime Ministers of Aurangzeb, p. 4.

3 Babur, Baburnama, Vol. I , p. 32; Mohammad Kasim Ferishtah, History of the Rise of Mohammedan Power in India, Eng.trans. J.Briggs, Vol. II, p. 5.

4 Babur, Baburnamana, Vol. I, p. 250; R.M. Caldecott, The Life of Babur, p. 97.

5 Babur, Baburnama, Vol. I, p. 250; R.M. Caldecot, The Life of Babur , p. 97; Yusuf Hussain Studies in Early Mughal History, Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Shimla, 1976, p.54.

estimation in the eyes of Babur and everything was done in compliance with his advice. No other man of Babur enjoyed more trust and authority as Bagi Chagniani.[1]

However, after sometime relations between the two become strained as Baqi Chagniani became overbearing in his conduct and instigated Jahangir Mirza to occupy the throne of Kabul. Babur refused to tolerate this arrogant posture adopted by his *Wazir* and asked him to resign.[2] Although Babur appointed other ministers, he never allowed anyone to become too powerful. Here he seems to have retained the Decrees (*Yasas*) of Changiz Khan to a great extent and exercised as much control over his nobles as any descendent of Changiz Khan. These customary rules designated as *Tura-i-Changezi* were closely followed by him.[3] At the same time he did not refrain from consulting his senior nobility before reaching a decision on important matters.[4] In addition there was an inner council consisting of Nizamuddin Khalifa, Qauban Ali Beg, Tardi Beg, Hindu Beg and a few others who met in an inner apartment known as the Khilwat Khana of the palace.[5] After 1526 A.D. the highest office in the empire was held by Nizammuddin Khalifa,[6] commonly called Mir Khalifa, the most important luminary on the political scene during Babur's time. He was, according to the

1 Babur, Baburnama, Vol. I, p. 249.

2 Babur, Baburnama, Eng.trans. William Erskine , Vol. II, p. 250; Michael, Prawdin, The Mughal Empire, Its Rise and Legacy, London, 1953, p. 499; Babur, Baburnama, Vol. II, p. 250.

3 In his memoirs, Babur writes, "My forefathers and family had always sacredly observed the rules of Changiz. In their parties, their courts, their festivals and their entertainments, in their sitting down and rising up they never acted contrary to the Tura-i-Changez". Baburnama, Vol. II, p. 7.

4 Mohibbul Hasan, Babur, Founder of the Mughal Empire in India,, p. 162.

5 Babur, Baburnama, Vol. I and II, p. 367; Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. I, Eng. trans. H. Beveridge, p. 276; Gulbadan Begum, Humayun Nama, p. 109; Waqiat-i-Baburi, Abdur Rahim's trans. quoted in Mohibbul Hasan, Babur, Founder of Mughal Empire, p. 162.

6 Ibid., p. 120, U.N. Day, The Mughal Government, p. 32; Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, Mughal Polity, Idarah- i- Adabiyat-i-Delli, New Delhi, 1984, p. 105.

impression given in Babur's memoirs, older than Babur[1] and like him a member of the family to which Timur belonged.[2] He was endowed with three titles of Sayyid, Khwaja and Barlas and four ranks Amir, Wakil, Sultan and Khalifa. Although contemporary sources are not clear regarding his official designation, later scholars say he was the *Wazir*.[3] Nizamuddin Ahmad calls him *Vakil-us-Sultanat*.[4] Badaoni gives him the designation of *Vakil* and *Wazir* Mutlaq.[5] Abul Fazl only says "he held a high rank under His Majesty[6] and the pillar of Babur's government.[7] Mullah Zain, Khalifa's contemporary, in his letter of victory giving an account of the battle of Khanwa refers to Khalifa as the pillar of the imperial fortune and the intimate councellor.[8]

Although Babur while acknowledging Khalifa's services does not designate him as *Wazir*, the titles of *Wakil* and Sultan Khalifa had been bestowed on him. From these titles and on the basis of the account of contemporary historians, it can be inferred that Nizamuddin Ali Khalifa

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1 Gulbadan Begum, Humayun Nama, p. 26,

2 Rushbrooke Williams, An Empire Builder of the Sixteenth Century, S.Chand and Co., New Delhi, n.d., p. 171.

3 Babur, Baburnama, p. 428; Niamatullah, Tarikh-i-Khan Jahan Lodhi, Eng.trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. V, p. 108; R.M. Caldecott, The Life of Babur, p. 209; D.N. Marshall, Mughals in India – A Bibliographical Survey, Vol. I, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1967, p. 347; Wolseley Haig, The Cambridge History of India ,Vol. IV, p. 12; R.P. Tripathi, Some Aspects of Muslim Administration, p.113; U.N. Day, The Mughal Government, p. 32; Ibn Hasan, Central Structure of the Mughal Empire, p. 120; William Erskine, History of India Under the First Two Sovereigns of the House of Timur Babur and Humayun, Vol. I, pp. 385, 467; Radhey Shyam, Babur, p. 409; A.L. Srivastava, Akbar the Great, Vol. I, p. 118.

4 Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Eng. trans. B.De, Vol. II, p. 28.

5 Abdul Qadir Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Eng. trans. S.A. Ranking, Vol. I, p. 451.

6 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. I, p. 281.

7 Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, trans. H.Blochmann, Vol. I, p. 463.

8 Babur, Baburnama, Vols. I and II, p. 565; Shaikh Zainuddin, Tabaqat-i-Baburi, p. 57, quoted by Mohibbul Hasan, Babur, Founder of the Mughal Empire in India, p. 163, refers to Amir Khalifa as "the nearest and most favourite of the king, the strong arm of the Imperial State – the premier noble".

was the *Vakil*[1] or Prime Minister and exercised general supervision over the civil and military affairs of the kingdom and over the heads of departments.[2] He also enjoyed a special status among the members of the royal family.[3] So much trust was reposed in him that during Babur's illness Amir Khalifa was free to do what he deemed to be proper in the interest of the state.[4] By his long service, good administration and arrangements of campaigns he had made himself indispensable to the king.

The extent of power enjoyed by Amir Khalifa is also evident from the fact that he attempted to regulate the succession to the throne after Babur's death. This is also indicative of a new dimension assumed by the nobility who asserted their claim that 'The empire belonged not to the ruler but to the ruling family.[5] However, Amir Khalifa realized his mistake and changed his mind. Not much importance is attached to this incident except that it was a black mark on the otherwise loyal and devoted services of one of the most powerful *Wazirs* of the time.[6]

As regards the institution of *Wizarat,* Humayun continued the policy of his father.[7] Less energetic but more ceremonious than Babur, Humayun emphasised that the king was the shadow of God on earth. His official historian, Khwandamir, called his Majesty the

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1 Abdul Qadir Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarkh, Vol. I, p.451; Babur, Baburnama, Vol. I, p. 428; Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqai-i-Akbari, Vol. I,p. 28; Mohibbul Hasan, Babur-Founder of Mughal Empire in India, p. 163.
2 Mohibbul Hasan, Babur-Founder of Mughal Empire in India, p. 163.
3 Gulbadan Begum, Humayunnama, p. 101.
4 Radhey Shyam, Babur, p. 389; Mohibbul Hasan, Babur, Founder of the Mughal Empire in India, p. 463.
5 Barthold, Encylopaedia of Islam, Vol. I, Leyden, 1913,p. 861; Iqtidar Alam Khan, "The Turko Mongol Theory of Kingship", Medieval India – A Miscellany, Vol. II, pp. 15-16.
6 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara ,Vol. II, Part 1, p. 222.
7 Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. I, p. 451.

personification of the spiritual and temporal sovereignty.[1] He left the *Wazir* in full possession of his powers.[2] His Prime Ministers, Amir Wais, Hindu Beg and Qaracha Khan were incharge of overall administration and also held charge of civil and military affairs.[3]

The position enjoyed by Hindu Beg as Humayun's *Wazir* is well described by Abul Fazl who says,

> *"The shutting and opening the binding and loosening of the great affairs of the officers and Wazirs, and of all the government clerks and those entrusted with civil affairs, and the fixing of the pay of the soldiers and the appointment of the household servants rested with him".*[4]

The status of Hindu Beg as *Wazir* is also gauged from the fact that when inspite of Sher Shah's repeated affirmations of obedience and loyalty, Humayun doubted his credibility, he sent no less a person than Hindu Beg, his trusted *Wazir,* on a fact-finding mission. Although Sher Khan outwitted him and bullied Hindu Beg into the belief that he had no intentions of breaking the Chunar accord which was misleading, Humayun's trust in his *Wazir* is reflected.

Hindu Beg's involvement as Humayun's advisor in administrative and military affairs and the latter's dependence on him is established by Humayun appointing Hindu Beg to assist Mirza Askari (who was appointed Viceroy of Gujrat) and to look after the province after its

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1 Khwandamir, Qanun-i-Humayuni, trans. Beni Prasad, Bib.Indica, Calcutta, 1940, p. 21.

2 Ibid., p. 29.

3 A.L. Srivastava, Akbar the Great, Vol. II, p. 44; Ishwari Prasad, Life and Times of Humayun, Orient Longman, Bombay, 1956, p. 261.

4 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 645.

acquisition.[1] Hindu Beg's ability and authority to take independent decisions is also reflected from the fact that when on Bahadur Shah's renewed attempts at reconquest of Gujrat, his express messages to Humayun for decisive orders failed to evoke any response, he appointed Askari as the emperor and himself the *Wazir*.[2]

Qaracha Khan, Humayun's *Wazir* after his defeat by Sher Khan and subsequent exile served him very loyally in his initial years as *Wazir*. [3] Soon after his success over Badakshan, Humayun fell seriously ill, an illness which came very near to changing the history of Mughal rule in Hindustan. At this time of crisis, Qaracha Khan the Prime Minister conducted himself with great decision and served his master whole heartedly.[4] Humayun addressed Qaracha Khan as Walid-i-Mohtrim (Respected father). On one occasion when Kamran threatened Qaracha Khan of putting his son to death, he assured Humayun of his support by saying, "I consider each hair of your Majesty's head worth the life of a son.[5]

In 1545 A.D. Humayun attempted a redistribution of powers of the *Vakil*, where *Diwani* went into the hands of the *Wazir* and general administrative functions remained with the *Vakil*. He probably wanted to use one office to balance the power of the other[6]. This was not liked by Qaracha Khan and he, on account of his position, was allowed to

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1 The Council, led by Hindu Beg, had suggested that Bahadur Shah be appointed Viceory. Hindu Beg's advice, that would have enabled Humayun to govern the province in the most peaceful way, although rejected by Humayun, reflects the Wazir's political acumen. William Erskine, History of India under the first two sovereigns of the House of Timur, Babur and Humayun, Vol. II, Idarah-i-Adabiyai-i-Delli, p. 133; Ishwari Prasad, Life and Times of Humayun, p. 81.

2 Ishwari Prasad, Life and Times of Humayun,, p. 81.

3 Gulbadan Begum, Humayun Nama Eng. trans. p. 180

4 Jauhar Aftabchi, Tazkirat-ul-Waqiat, Eng. trans. Major Charles Stewart, Idarah-i-Adabyat-i-Delli, 1972, p. 86; William Erskine, History of India under the First Two Sovereigns of the House of Timur, Babur and Humayun, Vol. II, p. 33.

5 Jauhar Aflabchi, Tazkirat-ul-Waqiat, p. 86.

6 Iqtidar Alam Khan, 'Wizarat under Humayun", P.I.H.C., 1960, p. 249.

retain both the posts of *Vakil* and *Wazir*.[1] Later on there were some differences between Humayun and Qaracha Khan owing to his Prime Minister's growing arrogance.[2] Qaracha Khan lost his temper on account of a quarrel with the *Diwan*, Khwaja Ghazi of Tabriz, and demanded his dismissal. No amount of persuasion from Humayun could satisfy him and he deserted to the side of Kamran.[3]

Later Humayun forgave him[4] but knowing that Qaracha Khan could be dangerous asked him to go on pilgrimage to Mecca. The latter however in defiance continued to be in league with Kamran.[5] He was finally slain while fighting against Humayun.[6]

The account of the *Wizarat* under Babur and Humayun is reflective of the nature of the Mughal ruling class in general. The

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1 Iqtidar Alam Khan, 'Wizarat under Humayun", P.I.H.C., 1960, p. 249.

2 Bayazid condemns Qaracha's conduct and comments on his impatience. Ishwari Prasad, Life and Time of Humayun, p. 249. Iqtidar Alam Khan, Wizarat under Humayun, P.I.H.C., 1960, p. 249.

3 Jauhar Aftabachi, Tazkirat ul Waqiat, p. 88; Iqtidar Alam Khan, Political Biography of a Mughal Noble, Munim Khan, Khan-I-Khanan, 1497-1575. Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1973, pp. 31-32; Ishwari Prasad, Life and Times of Humayun, also says immediate cause of final rupture was trivial, p. 271; Iqtidar Alam Khan, "Wizarat under Humayun, P.I.H.C., 1960, p. 249.

4 Humayun permitted Qaracha Khan to make his obeisance, addressed some conciliatory words to him and then desired him to be seated on his left below Tardi Beg. Abul Fazl, Akbar Nama, Vol. I, pp. 534-535; Nizamuddin Ahmad; Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 479; Jauhar Aftabchi, Tazkirat-ul-Waqiat, p.54; Erskine, History of India under the first two Sovereigns of the House of Timur, Babur and Humayun, p. 363.

5 When Kamran marched against Humayun and an alram was raised, Qaracha Khan did not desist from his treacherous designs and announced that Kamran was coming only to pay homage and an armed demonstration would frighten him. Ishwari Prasad, Life and Times of Humayun,, pp. 289-90.

6 There is difference of opinion regarding his death, Gulbadan Begum says that in the battle of Charikaran, Qaracha Khan and many others were killed. Humayun Nama, p. 196; Jauhar Aftabchi says Qaracha Khan fell lifeless in the field. Seeing him in this condition a soldier of Mirza Hindal's party galloped up to him and cut off his head and carried it to the king, Tazkirat ul Waqiat p. 101; Abul Fazl heard from a reliable source that Qaracha's head was struck off by Qambar Ali Lahori a servant of Hindal whose brother was killed by Qaracha, Akbar Nama, Vol. I, p. 570; Nizamuddin Ahmad says Qaracha Khan was taken prisoner and was conducted to the presence of Humayun where he was killed by Qauban Ali Lahori, Tabaqat i Akbari, , Vol.II, p. 78.

Nobility failed to constitute a disciplined and effective organization that could cope with the complex problems faced by the newly established empire in India.[1]

The first two sovereigns of Mughal India did not have the security of a stable empire which would empower them to introduce fundamental changes in the administrative structure to break the highheadness of the nobility. The fact that their *Wazirs* came from Central Asia and claimed of high descent also made them proud and arrogant.

On his accession Akbar was convinced that for the establishment, consolidation and expansion of the empire, he must have a ruling class that would owe everything to the emperor and their clan and family loyalties should not come in the way of their obedience to the sovereign. A significant aspect of the transformation that came about in the functioning of some institutions of the Mughal empire under Akbar was the evolution of a culturally unified nobility out of the multi-racial and religiously divergent elements inherited by him.[2] His greatest contribution to Indian constitutional development lies in his setting up of an administrative system based on a fusion of central Asiatic, Hindu and Persian systems which became the basis on which the Mughal empire rested not only during his time but also during the reigns of his three successors. Earlier Akbar's Turkish ancestor Timur also brought about a fusion of Mongol and Islamic ideas in polity. The turko-mongol culture, which he diffused throughout Central Asia by his conquest[3] was later brought to Hindustan by Akbar's grandfather Babur. Akbar

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1 Afzal Hussain, The Nobility under Akbar & Jahangir, A Study of family groups, p. 9; Richard M.Eaton, India's Islamic Traditions, 711-1750, O.U.P., New Delhi, 2003, p. 121.

2 Burton Stein, A History of India, O.U.P., New Delhi, 1998. p. 168.

3 Mansura Haider, "Timur's methods of Administration", P.I.H.C., 1977, p. 698; Kiran Pawar, 'Central Asiatic Background of some Aspects of Political Institutions and Administration of Akbar', P.I.H.C., 1988, p. 189.

built upon this in a systematic way.

An important element introduced by Akbar into imperial polity was the establishment of certain principles governing the relations between the king and the nobility. His success was the result of the creation of a composite nobility and removing the dependence of the sovereign on the Muslim nobility alone[1], also because of his essentially humane approach towards the members constituting the nobility, a feature that distinguished the Mughal Emperor from other polities of the contemporary Islamic world.[2] Bairam Khan the first person to hold the office of *Vakil-us-Sultanat*, whose otherwise spotless career of devotion to the Mughal ruling house was tarnished towards the last years of his life when he rebelled against Akbar is reflective of this attitude.

Although Akbar prided himself for being the author of most of his measures there is undeniable evidence to prove that he benefited greatly from the counsel of able ministers.[3] His first Prime Minister, Bairam Khan, belonged to the Baharlu clan of the Qaraqunlu Turks and was the fifth in descent from Ali Shuker Beg,[4] a prominent noble in the

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1 Athar Ali, "Foundations of Akbar's Organization of the Nobility, an Interpretation", Medieval India Quarterly, Vol. III, 1958, p. 30-37. Muhammad Bin Tughluq is known for his innovative steps like repressive attitude towards Muslim orthodoxy; Isami, Futuh-us-Salatin,, p. 513, quoted in Harman Kulke, The State in India 1000-1707. O.U.P., 1997, p. 270. The existence of a composite nobility in terms of religion under Muhammad Bin Tughlug, had failed to bring about political stability.

2 In contrast to their despotic contemporaries the Mughal emperors stand apart, as executions of leading members of the nobility was a common feature under Shah Abbas (1587-1629) the Great Safawid Emperor, whereas under Mughal emperors, even dismissals, leave alone executions, were very rare. Harman Kulke, The State in India 1000 - 1707, O.U.P., 1997, p. 271.

3 Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p.234 says he professed gratefulness to God for not finding any capable minister or they would have taken the credit for measures initiated by him.

4 Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, The Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, Eng. trans. Z.A. Desai, Idarah-i-Adabiyat-i-Delli, 1993, p. 7; Badaoni, Muntakhab-ul-Tawarikh, Vol. I, pp 190-191, Badaoni gives a brief biography of Bairam Khan, Abdul Baqi Nihavandi, Maasir-i-Rahimi, ed. Hidayat Hosain, Calcutta, 1910, also gives details of his ancestry and early life, Vol. I, pp. 57-59.

court of Mirza Jahan Shah (1437-67 A.D.), the ruler of Azarbaijan. The family ever since the time of Ali Shukr Beg had inter married with the Timurids.[1]

The reconquest of Hindustan by Humayun and his sudden death within a few months leaving behind Akbar a boy of thirteen to succeed him determined the drastic change in the position enjoyed by the *Wazir*.[2] Bairam Khan, Humayun's trusted noble was not only to act as tutor and guardian (Ataliq) but also his *Vakil-us-Sullanat*[3] and the circumstances in which he assumed the office was sure to make him all powerful. Faced with an immense task he had to nurture the state which was still in its infancy by military successes and revitalise the political set up by keeping its administrative needs in mind.

Baraim Khan in his capacity as Khan-i-Khanan[4] was virtually the grand *Wazir* or the first class *Wazir* of Al Mawardi model. The initial years of Akbar's reign provide numerous examples to prove the fact that Bairam Khan enjoyed supreme position in the empire and often did

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1 Shukr Beg's son Pir Ali Beg was married to the daughter of Mirza Sikander. The two sons of Mirza Jahan Shah were married to the two daughters of Ali Shukr Beg, while a third daughter married the son of the Timurid Sultan Abu Said. Later Sultan Mahmud's daughter by Pasha Begum was married to Babur. Baburnama, Vol. I, pp. 48-49; Afzal Hussain, "Marriages among Mughal nobles as an index of Status and Aristocratic Integration"; P.I.H.C., 1972, pp. 304-312 discusses the pattern of marriages among Mughal nobles.

2 Bairam Khan immediately summoned all the important nobles present in the camp and had Akbar crowned as Emperor. Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. I, p. 351; Muhammad Arif Qandhari, Tarikh-i-Akbari, trans. Tasneem Ahmad, Pragati, Publications, New Delhi, 1993, p. 44; Bayazid Bayat, Tazkirat-i-Humayun O Akbar, ed. Hidayat Hussain, Bib. Ind., Calcutta, 1941, p. 195.

3 The title given to the highest ranking officer in the Mughal administration. The Prime Minister in the times of Akbar was designated as the Vakil.

4 *Khan-i-Khanan* (Lord of Lords) was the earliest and the highest title in the Mughal Kingdom and as it would appear was bestowed without being associated with any special official duties. It was conferred only on one person and appears to connote rank rather than power and office. Blochman in the translation of Ain-i-Akbari mentions the title and its insignia. In the assemblage of Amirs i.e., the dignitaries of the imperial court, the Khan-i-Khanan took precedence over all other nobles immediately after the royal princes. Bairam Khan was the first recipient of this enviable title.

not consult the emperor on important issues. He took upon himself the duty of appointing and dismissing ministers, took decisions in military and political affairs, appointing his own men to key positions[1] and imprisoning or executing influential officials, if he considered such actions necessary in the interest of the state.[2] It was alleged that he even interfered in the personal matters of the emperor, who could incur personal expenditure only with his approval. By these appointments Bairam Khan was able to have complete control over a large portion of the areas that had been brought under Mughal rule. In order to show his implicit confidence in Bairam Khan Akbar gave his consent to the marriage of his protector with Salima Sultan Begum[3] the daughter of Humayun's sister and therefore a cousin of Akbar, further boosting his position.[4]

There is no parallel in the history of Northern India of the position and power enjoyed by Bairam Khan as *Wazir.* As the centre of all political initiatives, Bairam Khan himself enjoyed the position of a defacto ruler. He sat in the *Diwan* Khana twice a week and put civil and military affairs in order. Pir Mohammad Sarwani, his personal servant,

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1 Areas in Doab were assigned to Ali Quli Uzbek (Sarkar of Sambhal) Abdullah Khan Uzbek (Sarkar of Kalpi) Sikander Khan Uzbek was sent to assist in operations against Sikander Sur. Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, pp. 69, 97,105-106 and Badauni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 14, give the details of cooperation between Bairam Khan and the Uzbeks. Iqtidar Alam Khan, "The Mughal Court Politics During Baram Khan's Regency", Medieval India A Miscellany, Vol. I, p. 28.

2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, pp. 63-64, 70-71, tells us that Bairam Khan opposed the marriage of Akbar to the daughter of Abdullah Khan Mughal, Badauni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh writes he (Akbar) had no voice in some of the transactions relating to the expenses of the exchequer and because there was no privy purse at all, the servants of the Emperor had poor fiefs, Vol. II, pp. 26-29, 36-39.

3 Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, The Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, Eng. trans. Part I, p. 9; Abul Fazl and Farishtah also call her Salima Sultan Begum.

4 Salima Sultana Begum was the daughter of Mirza Nuruddin Mahomed and the niece (half sister's daughter of Humayun). She had a political vein and wrote under the pen name of Makhfi (Concealed), Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 371.

was attached with the King in the capacity of the *Vakil* of the regent and was a key figure in the administration.[1]

Two old officers of the empire Khwaja Sultan Ali and Mir Asghar Munshi were dismissed by him.[2] Khwaja Aminuddin was appointed Bakshi and Shaikh Gadai Kamboh was appointed 'Sadr'. Both these officers were protégés of Bairam Khan.[3] Although Bairam Khan's services to the ruling family and the newly, established kingdom cannot be ignored,[4] the events of his four years regime reveal that once he got the strings of power into his hands he failed to rise above the level of an ordinary administrator.[5] Excess of power, lead Bairam Khan to adopt a harsh and discordant practice towards his supposed and suspected enemies.

The concentration of all authority in the hands of one group of nobles was naturally resented by the other groups. Primary among them were Maham Anagah and her son who were resentful at being denied their due share in power. Gradually they made Akbar an

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1 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, pp. 45, 59; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 377.

2 Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. III, p. 14, says Khwaja Sultan Ali and Mir Asghar Munshi were arrested by Bairam Khan because they were considered supporters of Tardi Beg

3 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 630; Abul Fazl says, Things became beyond bounds on account of ill fated maladroit flatterers such as Wali Zulqadar and Shaikh Gadai Kamboh, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 163.

4 There can be no better testimony to Bairam Khan's worth than that recorded by Badaoni, who could seldom see any good in a Shia, "In Wisdom, generosity, sincerely goodness of disposition, submissiveness and humility, he surpassed all. The second conquest of Hindustan and the building up of the Empire were due to his strenuous efforts, his valour and his wise policy.... " Badoani, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. III, pp. 265, 266.

5 To his own menial servant..... he gave titles of Sultan and Khan and presented them with .... rich fiefs and productive territories, whilst he with total want of consideration made the Khans, the Princes the officers and the trusted servants of H.M. Jannat Ashiani , whose rank, claims and qualifications are known to every one to be in want of dry bread......." Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, pp. 106-107.

accomplice in a conspiracy against the regent[1] leading to his removal. Akbar who was now himself tired of the bonds of tutelage was convinced by this group of nobles that unless Bairam was removed he would not be in a position to exercise real power. Soon after the Khan-i-Khanan met with a tragic end on being murdered in January 1561 A.D.

The arrogant attitude adopted by Bairam Khan and the difficulty Akbar had in removing him led Akbar to define the powers and functions of the later incumbents vis-à-vis the emperor. The distribution of Bairam Khan's power and distinctions between three individuals was the first step in that direction. Shihabuddin Ahmed, with whom Maham Anagah was later associated, was given control of political and financial affairs,[2] Shamsuddin Atka Khan, the standard, drum and tumantogh[3] and Munim Khan the office of *Vakil* and the title of Khan-i-Khanan.[4]

This change which resulted in the Prime Minister gradually losing his power of a defacto grand *Wazir*, was brought about by circumstances not entirely in Akbar's hand, but his deliberate policy adopted a little later accelerated the process of clipping his authority. Maham Anagah who controlled affairs soon after Bairam Khan was removed from the scene, kept Akbar as her willing tool which she used very effectively to achieve her end. Though Maham Anagah could not openly take part in directing public affairs but she firmly held the reins

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1 Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, specifically mentions that Maham Anagah and Adham Khan often spoke to Akbar against Bairam Khan, Vol. II, pp. 35-37. Mohammad Arif Qandhari, Tarikh-i-Akbari, pp. 57-58, says Bairam Khan's main fault was giving undue favours to a section of nobles at the cost of the old nobility, Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, pp. 93-94, however, writes that in the conspiracy against Bairam Khan the initiative was taken by Akbar himself and he conveyed his intentions to others.

2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. I, pp. 143-144.

3 Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 531.

4 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 174; Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 534.



4. The assasination of Bairam Khan by Afghans besides the lake Sahasnak, Patan (Baroda) on 31st January 1561 (*Akbar nama*. Victoria and Albert Museum I.S. No. 5/117) Artist: Tulsi and Tiryyia.

of government. As leader of the conspiracy against Bairam[1], she was greatly successful in her designs.

However there are several incidents which indicate that Maham Anagah who on account of her excellent services, abundant wisdom and exceeding devotion to Akbar regarded herself as the substantive Prime Minister, was not as influential as it is thought. It was during the so-called ascendancy that Akbar married a Rajput princess, abolished forcible conversion of prisoners of war and inspite of Maham Anagah's opposition appointed Atka Khan as *Vakil-us-Sultanat.* It is argued that in the later stages Akbar was using Maham as a tool and within a course of a year and a half, she found that her influence had completely vanished.[2] It was therefore Akbar who used Maham Anagah to crush his enemies. As soon as he found her unwilling to cooperate further, and inclined to dominate , he set her aside and chose new allies. [3] Her tenure as Prime Minister witnessed a significant change in the attitude of Emperor as well as status and position enjoyed by the *Vakil.* Quick changes in the office of *Vakil* indicated a change, and with every change the interest of Akbar was served and he finally emerged successful.

Munim Khan enjoyed two tenures as *Vakil.* The first soon after the suspension of Bairam Khan when he was also given the title of Khan-i-Khanan.[4] Munim Khan was the son of an amir also called

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1 Iqtidar Alam Khan, "The Mughal Court Politics during Bairam Khan's Regency", Medieval India – A Miscellany,Vol. I, 1969, pp. 32-33.

2 R.P. Tripathi, "Maham Anaga and Akbar", Journal of Indian History, Vol. I, 1921, pp. 27-44.

3 When Adham Khan, son of Maham Anagah, slew the Vakil-us-Sultanat Atka Khan, Akbar did not care about Maham Anagah's position and got Adham Khan kllled; Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 273; Muhammad Arif Qandhari,, Tarikh-i-Akbari, pp. 100-101.

4 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 114; Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 140, The highest title in the state was conferred on Munim Khan after Bairam Khan's death.

Bairam Khan,[1] and was a grandee of the Humayun's court. In his capacity as *Vakil*, Munim Khan like Bairam Khan was supposed to exercise control over both financial as well as military and administrative affairs of the state as the post of *Wazir* entrusted with the responsibility of managing finances was not revived, having fallen into disuse during the preceding four years.[2]

However, the actual powers of the *Vakil* were not the same as those exercised by Bairam Khan. Akbar had started taking greater interest in matters of government and therefore the *Vakil* could not enjoy the same position as enjoyed during Akbar's minority.[3] Although Munim Khan enjoyed full powers of the office, he found it difficult to function without the cooperation of Maham Anagah, hence he attached himself to her group. Fear of the popularity of Atka Khan was another factor that made them cooperate with each other.

Shamsuddin Atka Khan, the next *Vakil*,[4] who was raised to the Prime Ministership after the fall of Bairam Khan and Munim Khan's first tenure as *Vakil*, was the son of the Mir Yar Muhammad " a spiritually minded householder" and had been taken into imperial

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1 Some manuscripts read Miram , but Bairam is the preferred reading. Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. II. p.42.

2 The concept of Wazir, who was to be in sole charge of the revenue department and independent of the Vakil, first came in vogue under Humayun. At the time of Humayun's death the diwani was controlled by his Wazir Khwaja Sultan Ali, Iqtidar Alam Khan, "*Wizarat under Humayun*" (1545- 1555) P.I.H.C., 1960, p. 249; when Bairam Khan became, Vakil-us-Sultanat he took charge of the diwani himself and the office of the Wazir was probably abolished . It was probably not revived till 1564 when Muzaffar Khan was raised to the status of Diwan-i-Wizarat-i-kul. Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 193.

3 Iqtidar Alam Khan, Poitical Biography of a Mughal Noble Munim Khan, Khan-i-Khanan, 1497-1575, Munshiram Manohar Lal, 1991, p. 56.

4 Atka Khan's letter to Akbar, vide Akbarnama, Vol. II, pp. 119-121. The letter was written probably in May 1560, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 120; Maasir-I-Rahimi, Vol. I, pp. 667-668. Akbar had earlier promised the 'tumantogh' to Munim Khan but it seems that after having decided to appoint him Vakil, the king considered it prudent to satisfy the vanity of Shamsuddin by conferring upon him the prestigious standards till then enjoyed by Bairam Khan. Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara,, Vol. II, pp. 531-535.

service after the battle of Kannauj.[1]

When Akbar was convinced of the offences of Maham Anagah and was looking around for other advisers, Atka Khan sent a petition to Akbar requesting him to assign the office of *Vakil* to him. This petition of Atka Khan which was accepted by Akbar is a very important landmark in the development of the institution of Vikalat for it connotes that the petitioner could suggest such a thing to the emperor and that Akbar even agreed to it.[2]

The appointment of Atka Khan to the highest office of *Vakil*[3] led to antagonizing Maham Anagah and Munim Khan[4] and resulted in the formation of two camps in the court which eventually led to the murder of the *Vakil* by Maham Anagah's son Adham Khan.[5]

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1 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. I, pp. 166-168; Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. III, pp. 308-309.

2 Promotions and new appointments were made by an order called *Farman-i-Sabti* According to Abul Fazl, *Farman-i-Sabti* were issued for three purposes: 1. For the appointment to Vakilship; 2. For the tutorship of a prince; 3. for appointment to the post of Wazir (finance Minister) or to the post of Sadr or Judge. Even after promotions were made, the Emperor considered representations made by the nobles. The case of Shamsuddin is an outstanding example of this. As the victor of Bairam Khan, he felt that he had not been given promotion which he deserved for having supressed a formidable rebellion. Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, pp. 137-138.

3 Shamsuddin is described as *Vakil* in the sources, but it is difficult to find out the date of his appointment Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 595; Akbaranama, Vol. II, p. 151.

4 Abul Fazl remarks, "When the Khan Aazam in his straightness and loyaly undertook the service of the Shahinshah, Munim Khan and Maham Anagah should have looked upon him as a providential helper instead of being so grieved and vexed. Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 231.
Mohammad Alif Qandhari, Tarikh-i-Akbari, pp. 100-101; Muhammad Qasim Ferishtah, History of the Rise of Mohammedan Power in India till the year 1612, Vol. I, p. 252, also supports Qandhari's statement that there was a long drawn struggle which finally resulted in the murder of Shamsuddin.

5 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 278, Abul Fazl says Munim Khan's "motive in instigating Adham Khan was that after this affair the binding and loosening of the transaction of the sublime family and the control of all matters - political and financial, would be in his hands"; Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, 158 and Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 52 also say that Shamsuddin's murder was the result of a conspiracy of Munim Khan. However, Iqtidar Alam Khan in Political Biography of a Mughal Noble – Munim Khan Khan-I-Khanan (1497-1575), argues against the existence of a wider conspiracy, pp. 66-67.

The Prime Ministership of Atka Khan though short lived was significant because unlike his predecessors, Bairam Khan, Maham Anagah and Munim Khan, he remained devoted to the ruling family and served the emperor selflessly. His murder[1] was a very tragic incident but Akbar refrained from carrying out any reprisals against Munim Khan and reinstated him to the little of *Vakil-us-Sultanat* and the title of Khan-i-Khanan[2] in June 1562 A.D. Akbar displayed wisdom in doing so, as circumstances demanded that he makes use of the services of all experienced officers but henceforth the person holding the office of *Vakil* was only to be an instrument of shaping his policies.

The prestige and authority of the highest office of *Vakil* in the empire suffered on account of the circumstances in which it was refilled. Munim Khan continued to hold it till June 1567 A.D., but his involvement in Atka Khan's murder did not permit him to wield full authority.[3] Within three months of his reinstatement his financial authority was clipped with the creation of the office of *Diwan* of crown territory (Khalisa) and the appointment of Aitimad Khan a competent financier to hold charge of it in September 1562 A.D.[4]

The most effective blow to the authority of *Vakil* came in March 1564[5] when Muzaffar Khan was promoted from the post of *Diwan-i-*

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1 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, gives the date as May, 1562, Vol. II, p. 269. Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari places the occurrence a year later in 1563 A.D. In the details of the murder also authorities are at variance. Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, states that Adham himself killed Atka Khan; others says that he gave him a dagger thrust and left him to be killed by his attendants, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, pp. 321,324.

2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, VOl. II, p. 278; Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, The Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, Part I, p. 17.

3 Bayazid Bayat, Tarikh-i-Humayun wa, Akbar, ed., Hidayat Hussain, Bib. Ind. Series, Asiatic Society of Bengal, p. 275,discusses in detail the difficulties faced by Munim Khan, the restrictions placed on his movements and how the officers humiliated him in every possible manner.

4 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama,Vol. II, pp. 197-198.

5 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 189, says it seems to have occurred some time after Munim Khan's return from Jalalabad in March, 1564 A.D.

Buyutat to that of *Diwan-i-kul,* a post created to directly supervise the revenue and financial affairs of the empire.[1] Further, the appointment of Lashkar Khan as *Mir Bakshi* deprived the *Vakil* of his military responsibilities as well. However, his position as the first man in the state continued and he held the highest rank but his influence henceforth depended not on his office, but upon his personality and the conditions of the time. Although the outward distinction and prestige remained, the real power behind the office was no more there. The fact that Akbar chose to keep the office of *Vakil* in abeyance as he could not find a suitable person for the most coveted office in the empire is reflective of the role that he was to assume in the coming years.

The six year tenure of Munim Khan was extremely unsuccessful and proved fatal for the office of the *Vakil.* During the first phase he showed uncertainty and placed himself in the hands of Maham Anagah and during the second too he showed lack of initiative and was no longer the motive force behind administrative decisions. However, Shaikh Farid Bhakkari calls him a man of excellent disposition and one of the most valiant men of the age.[2]

However, the rapid increase in the size of Akbar's empire and the consequent increase in the work of administration made it necessary for him to revive office of vikalat .[3] Muzaffar Khan Turbati was appointed to

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1 Iqtidar Alam Khan, Political Biography of a Mughal Noble Munim Khan, Khan-i-Khanan, *1497-1575* p.72, says Munim Khan was stripped of his power as Vakil, which was transferred to Muzaffar Khan. Khan reproduces Akbar's orders which are found in Abul Qasim Namakin's, Munshat-i-Namakin urging all to "regard him as Wakil-i-kul Sahib-i-Ikhtiyar, wa Wazir.-i-tadbir wafir iqtidar (a Wakil-i-kul possessing wide authority and an efficient and powerful wazir) and cooperate with him." Abul Fazl also hints that the office of Diwan-i-Wizarat-I-Kul carried with it functions and powers of both Vakil and the Wazir, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 97. It appears that this order, while formally recognizing the Wazir and Wakil as two separate and independent offices, sought to entrust both of these to one and the same person.

2 Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, Eng.trans. p. 18.

3 Abul Fazl, *Akbarnama*, Vol. III, p. 68.

the high position in November 1573.[1] He was given the title of Jumlat-ul-Mulk.[2] Although he had perfect knowledge of revenue affairs, his performance in the highest office was just satisfactory because faithful adherence to Akbar's revolutionary policies and statesmanship rather than specialized knowledge of revenue were the basic requirements of success as Akbar's Prime Minister. Muzaffar became haughty and arrogant during his tenure as *Vakil* which proved to be very short. However in the absence of any other alternative as well as his experience he was reappointed to the office in October 1577 A.D. Muzaffar was the last of Akbar's *Vakil*s who exercised some influence on the administration but his position was purely personal and the respect shown to him by the Emperor[3] was due to his efficient service and loyalty and not to his office.

After Muzaffar Khan, Akbar did not appoint any one to the Vikalat for a period of ten years (1579-89 A.D.) simply because no one was found fit for the post.[4] During this time Todar Mal enjoyed the high office of Mushrif *Diwan*. According to Abul Fazl he enjoyed virtually the position of a *Vakil*,[5] but the importance given to him as the head of the finance department was never ignored, especially because the financial head was supervising the government machinery as well. However, realizing the honorific value of the Vikalat, he did not abolish it and held it as the highest spectacular reward that could be given to the ablest and the most favoured official.

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1 Mohammand Arif Qandhari, Tarikh-i-Akbari, p. 216; Abul Fazl in *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I p. 340, places the incident in the eighteenth year of Akbar's reign, 1574 A.D.

2 Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut -Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 174.

3 Mohammad Arif Qandhari who knew Muzaffar very well gives detailed information about how on one of his visits to Ajmer, Akbar allowed Muzaffar Khan to go on horseback while he himself walked a distance of a kilometre to the shrine. Tarikh-i-Akbari, p. 266.

4 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama , Vol. III, p. 560.

5 We read of no Hindu Diwan being given the title of Wazir. Todar Mal in 1581 A.D. was given "Ali Mansab Vazarat Kul Men Haid Ulistaqlal", Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, p. 355; quoted in J.N.Sarkar, Mughal Adminstration, Calcutta, 1924, p.23.

Perhaps the appointment of Todar Mal to the highest office was not made in a formal manner. But it is certain that he functioned as Prime Minister from 1582 A.D. till his death in 1589 A.D. This is clear from what Abul Fazl wrote "virtually the position of *Vakil* (Prime Minister) was conferred on him. Everything was referred to him and a choice ordering of administrative and financial matters was the result".[1] He rightfully enjoyed the virtual position of *Vakil.* In terms of his contribution to the Mughal Empire, Raja Todar Mal occupied the highest place amongst Akbar's Hindu nobility (the others being Man Singh, Bhagwan Das, Birbal etc.)

It is difficult to ascertain whether Todar Mal enjoyed all the powers of his new office. It was against Akbar's considered policy to make the Prime Minister the head of the administrative set up and consequently the Raja must have wielded the powers of a Prime Minister whom the jurists call the *Wazir* of the second category. Nevertheless he continued to attend to all political and revenue matters till 1589 A.D.[2]

Todar Mal is said to have been the last great Prime Minister of Akbar's reign. After his death Akbar raised Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan, son of Bairam Khan to the position of Prime Minister at the end of December 1589 A.D. Infact ever since the removal of Bairam Khan the position of his family had by and large deteriorated, though

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1 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 561, Ibn Hasan does not include Todar Mal among Akbar's Vakils but R.P. Tripathi who also omitted the Raja's name in his Some Aspects of Muslim Administration has rectified the error in his later work "Rise and Fall of Mughal Empire ,Vol. I. Todar Mal was appointed Mushrif-i-Diwan in 1574 A.D., (Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 158) and was promoted to a higher post in March 1582 A.D. (Akbarnama,Vol. III, p. 381) During the reign of Akbar, there was no post higher than that of Mushrif-i-Diwan, except Vikalat , Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 6.

2 Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 263; Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 378.

Akbar did retain some of its members in high ranks and positions.[1] This appointment was more of a personal favour for his attachment to the king from the boyhood rather than conferment of any real power. With his rise the eclipse of the family from influential court circles came to an end. His position rose further when he was married to the sister of Mirza Aziz Koka.[2]

During his tenure as *Vakil* he was given the jagir of Jaunpur and ordered to take charge of the place. Since he was posted at Jaunpur, he remained more or less cut off from the court. His talent was utilized in military successes.[3] Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan, was perhaps the greatest of Akbar's Prime Ministers, in courage, generosity and political skill.

The last person to hold the office of *Vakil* under Akbar was Mirza Aziz Koka, son of Shamsuddin Atka Khan and Akbar's nurse Jiji Anaga. Akbar's love for him is revealed from his saying "I so love Aziz that though he shows evil thought we can think nothing but good of him".[4] Mirza Aziz Koka enjoyed a distinct position amongst Akbar's *Vakil*s. Akbar often commented "a stream of milk connected him and *Aziz*." An idea of Aziz Koka's prestige can be had from the fact that two of his daughters were married to princes of the royal family — one of them to prince Murad[5] and another to prince Khusrau during his tenure as *Vakil*.[6]

It is surprising that none of the contemporary sources mention

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1 Afzal Hussain, The Nobility under Akbar and Jahangir, A Study of Family Groups, p. 27.

2 Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, p. 22

3 He performed great deeds in Akbar's time like the victory of Gujrat, conquest of Sind and defeat of Suhail Khan of Bijapur , Shan Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 63; Mohammad Arif Qandhari, Tarikh-i- Akbari, *p. 5.*

4 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 639; Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. III, p. 238.

5 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, pp. 511-512.

6 Ibid., p. 121.

much as regards the power of Aziz Koka as *Vakil*. Though he exercised an immense influence on the emperor he does not appear to have exercised much influence in the administration of the empire.

In 1605 A.D. when Akbar was ill, a plot was hatched to set aside Salim, (Jahangir) the heir apparent and place his son Khusrau (Aziz Koka's son in law) to the throne. The fact that this plot was hatched by the *Vakil* of the Empire along with Raja Mansingh throws light on the power enjoyed by Aziz Koka in his capacity as the highest official in the empire.[1] The conspiracy failed and Jahangir on his accession to the throne, honoured most of his commitments.[2] The fact that Aziz Koka's name does not appear in any administrative measure despite occupying the highest office of the empire till Akbar's death, shows that the office was more of a personal dignity than any real or substantial work and that Akbar in practice took the sting out of the *Vakil*ship and made it almost harmless.

The history of *Vikalat* during the reign of Akbar was one of gradual decline. From the enjoyment of unlimited authority in the begining of the reign the *Vakil*'s position in the beginning of the seventeenth century became more or less honorific and though he continued to enjoy dignity and prestige he became a shadow of his former self. The policy of Akbar was followed by his successors and none of the later *Vakil*s appear to have regained the influence which a Prime Minister under an absolute monarchy was expected to exercise. Following his father's example, Jahangir did not allow any individual to gather too much authority in his hands and overshadow the emperor. In the initial years the *Vakil* was the highest officer, the vice regent or

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1 Afzal Hussain, The Nobility under Akbar and Jahangir, A Study of Family Groups, analyses the details of conspiracy, p. 186.

2 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Eng. trans. Rogers and Beveridge, Vol. I, p. 14.

the Prime Minister of the Empire.[1] It is significant that during the reign of Akbar's successors it was the *Wazir* who became supreme in importance and was considered as the premier noble.

Sharif Khan, son of the great painter and calligraphist Abdussamad was the first *Vakil* under Jahangir. Considering that he was given the highest grade, the title of Amir ul Umara[2] and the distinctions enjoyed by Bairam Khan, the powers of the Vikalat could have been revived under him. But owing to his illhealth he was replaced by Asaf Khan Qazvini who again on account of lack of trust by the emperor was shifted to the Deccan. Their appointment and dismissal reflects two significant trends in the early period of the institution. Firstly, the emperor making use of his discretion in appointing and removing high officials to the office and secondly, refraining from conferring the post on any high ranking noble.

The second phase of Wizarat under Jahangir began in 1611 A.D., the year Jahangir married Nur Jahan and the subsequent rise of Itmad-ud-Daulah to the Wizarat [3] From this time onwards the *Vakil* as the senior most official is not heard of and it is the *Wazir/Diwan*, though theoretically the finance minister, supervised all other branches of administration. A just, fair and compassionate man, Itmad-ud-Daulah was exceptionally well educated and considered exceedingly clever and skilful both in writing and transacting business. He did not owe his rise entirely to the influence of his daughter.[4]

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1 Beni Prasad, History of Jahangir, p. 95.

2 The tile of Khan-i-Khanan was already held by Abdur Rahim, (who died in 1627) and could not be conferred on a second person, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p. 13; Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, The Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, p. 60.

3 Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 404.

४. "On the basis of seniority in service, extent of sincerity and experience in the affairs of the Government, I exalted Itmad-ud-Daulah to the high office of Wizarat of the Dominion ". Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Eng. trans., Vol. I, p. 200.

During the next eleven years Itmad-ud-Daulah, who was the *Diwan*-i-Ala, held the main strings of administration. As regards the status enjoyed by him,[1] he reminds one of Bairam Khan and it may be presumed that in the appointment of generals, for supervision of the army and fresh appointment of governors, his voice carried weight. He had the complete trust of Jahangir who conferred upon him the title of *Madar-ul-Mulk*, 'Pivot of the country.'[2]

During his tenure as Prime Minister, Itmad-ud-Daulah was rewarded substantially with honours bestowed upon him, the likes of which no other minister on record had ever seen. In addition to the post of *Diwan* until his death, he probably acquired the additional office of *Vakil* after the death of Amirul Umara Sharif Khan, although there is evidence that his son Abul Hasan Asaf Khan also served as *Vakil* during this period.[3] In 1615 A.D. he was given a standard and drums to be beaten after the Emperor's entrance to the court.[4] In 1616 A.D., when Jahangir was disturbed at the death of his grand daughter, Itmad-ud-Daulah was called upon to write his memoirs. On one occasion Jahangir even removed his turban and placed it on Itmad-ud-Daulah's head as a sign of special favour.[5] He was one of the three privileged persons to receive a personal copy of the 'Jahangirnama', a record of first twelve years of Jahangir's reign.[6]

The *Wizarat*, by the time Itmad-ud-Daulah came to occupy the

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3 From a rank of 1500 enjoyed by him he rose to that of 7000/7000 in 1619 A.D. Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri., Vol. I, p. 278.

4 Ibid., Vol. II, p. 80.

3 Jahangir no where mentions the appointment of Itmad-ud-Daulah as Vakil but Mutamad Khan says that he was given the office of Wakalat-i-Kul, though he does not give the date of his appointment; Wali Sarhindi writing in the fourteenth year in his Tawarikh-i-Jahangir Shahi calls Asaf Khan, Wakil-i-Hazrat. Probably the office was different from and one lower than that of Wakil-i-Kul, Irfan Habib, "The Family of Nurjahan during Jahangir's reign, "A Political Study" Medieval India – A Miscellany, Vol. I, p. 78.

4 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p. 281.

5 Ibid., p. 378.

6 Beni Prasad, History of Jahangir, p. 123.

post, had developed into a well organized institution and during his incumbency, he acted as the *Wazir* of the Mughal Empire, with great skill. However, it is significant that though contemporary authorities bear testimony to his qualities and every honour and distinction was conferred upon him, Jahangir continued to conduct the government in his own way without the domination of the *Wazir.*[1]

After the death of Itmaduddaulah,[2] the Emperor appointed Abul Hasan as *Diwan* or *Wazir.*[3] Born Abul Hasan, he received the titles of Itiqad Khan in 1611[4] and Asaf Khan in 1614.[5] As a result of family ties and because of his expertise as a courtier Asaf Khan was taken in by Jahangir as his adopted son (farzandi). "And like his own father was known as the pillar of the kingdom".[6] He was the most powerful member of the Nur Jahan Janta.[7] An idea of the power enjoyed by Asaf Khan as Prime Minister is found in the remark by *Francisco* Pelsaert,

> *"The king does not trouble himself with public affairs but behaves as if they were of no concern of his. If anyone approaches him he will give no definite answer of yes or no*

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1 Sir Thomas Roe was present at the court during the period of Itamad-ud-Daulah's glory and his account of him creates the same impression. He has made mention of him on different occasions and in all these accounts there is not the slightest indication of his influence over the king.

2 Jahangir expressed his loss, at Itmad-ud-Daulah's death in the following words, "Though the weight of such a kingdom was on his shoulders..... yet no one ever went to Itmad-ud-Daulah with a petition or business, who turned from him in an injured frame of mind", Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. II, p. 222.

3 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. II, p. 222; Beni Prasad, History of Jahangir, p. 268.

4 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p. 202; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 260.

5 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p. 260.

6 Ibid., p. 81.

7 Francisco Palsaert, Jahangir's India, The Remonstrantie of Franciso Palsaert, Eng.trans. W.H. Moreland, Idarah-i-Adabiyat-i-Delli, Delhi, 1972, "Jahangir is king in name only, while she (Nur Jahan) and her brother Asaf Khan hold the Kingdom firmly in their hands", p. 50.

referring him promptly to Asaf Khan who makes it a point to communicate it to Nur Jahan, his sister".[1]

It is surprising that the post of *Vakil* which was kept in abeyance between the fourth and twenty first year of Jahangir's reign was revived towards the end and the honour was bestowed on Asaf Khan at a critical time. The fact that Asaf Khan was related to both Nur Jahan and the ambitious prince Shah Jahan and could have maintained a balance must have prompted Jahangir to do so. [2]

Asaf Khan was the only *Vakil* to emerge relatively unharmed through the bitter years of succession emerging after 1627 A.D., as the most powerful man in Shah Jahan's government. On Shah Jahan's accession, both Asaf Khan, already the first man in the state and the person to whose influence, tact and cool courage Shah Jahan owed his throne, and Abul Hasan the *Diwan* were confirmed in their respective posts.[3] Asaf Khan as *Vakil* was given the title of *'Yamin-ud-Daulah'* (right hand of the state) and had the charge of Azuk[4] seal and rank of 8000/8000 a rank which no officer had hitherto received.

Contemporary sources point to certain differences between the two senior most officials of Shah Jahan, and Asaf Khan in his capacity

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1. Francisco Palsaert, Jahangir's India, The Remonstrantie of Franciso Palsaert, pp. 50-51; S.N. Hasan, "The Theory of Nur Jahan Junta" P.I.H.C. 1958, pp. 324-325; Irfan Habib, 'The Family of Nurhajan During Jahangir's reign a political Study, Medieval India – A Miscellany, Vol. I., pp. 74-95 also discuss the rise and influence of Itmad-ud-Daulah and Asaf Khan.
2. Irfan Habib, says that Asaf Khan always held the office of Vakil eversince the death of Itmad-ud-Daulah (except for the summer of 1626 when he was ousted by Mahabat Khan) although not appointed officially; Iqtidar Alam Khan, "The Family of Nur Jahan during Jahangir's reign" – A political study, Medieval India – A Miscellany, Vol. I, p. 79.
3. Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 436; Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badashahnama,Vol. I, pp.113-114; quoted in Banarsi Prasad Saksena, History of Shahjahan of Dihli, Central Book Depot, Allahabad, 1958, p. 65. He says, "On February 26th, 1528 A.D. Shah Jahan arranged a magnificent reception for Asaf Khan .... and he was conferred to the office of Vakil".
4. A small round seal. Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 292.

as *Vakil* prevailed upon the emperor leading to the appointment of Iradat Khan as *Diwan.*[1] This is probably the only instance in Mughal history when *Diwan* was nominated by the *Vakil* and always worked together[2] Asaf Khan tried to assert himself and act as *Wazir-i-Tafwid* but despite the regard for his father-in-law the emperor adopted a cautious policy and refused to be over shadowed by the *Vakil.* This also explains the early dismissal of Asaf Khan's nominee Iradat Khan[3] and appointment of Afzal Khan to the office of *Diwan.* Asaf Khan, the last person to hold the office of *Vakil* died in 1641 A.D.[4]

Even before the *Vikalat* had actually ceased to exist, its duties were being entrusted to either the *Wazir* or *Diwan* in such a manner that they might bear the burden of the administration and at the same time not be in a position to wield power and influence which it was desired to avoid.[5]

The *Diwan* or the *Diwan-i-kul* became responsible for revenue and finance and corresponds exactly with the *Diwan*-i-Wizarat of the Ṣultanat and the *Diwan*-i-Amal of Ibn Khaldun. During the latter half of Shah Jahan's reign, the *Diwan*/*Wazir* came to be considered the

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1 The diwan by virtue of his control over financial affairs considered the Vakil to be only an ornamental head. Moreover his constitutional position had become secondary since 1564 A.D.

2 Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badshahnama, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 5.

3 Iradat Khan was given the title of Azam Khan and transferred to Deccan. B.P. Saksena, History of Shahjahan of Dihli, p. 75.

4 Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badshahnama, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 68; Beni Prasad, The History of Jahangir, p. 438. However, Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakirat-ul-Khawamin, gives the year of death as 1642 A.D., p. 14.

5 Ever since the reorganization of the government by Akbar the *Vakil* disappeared as an administrative officer. Henceforth the Diwan signed all state documents both as Diwan and Vakil. He emerged as the King's minister par excellence .... all imperial orders were first recorded in his office and he alone issued orders on behalf of the King. R.C. Majumdar, ed., History and Culture of the Indian People, Vol. VII; The Mughal Empire Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan, 1994, (3rd ed.), p.430.

highest office as the office of *Vakil*[1] had become almost defunct by that time.

Afzal Khan who held office for ten years till his death (1630-1640) was a very trusted and respected man and wielded substantial influence on the administration. According to Abdul Hamid Lahori, all important farmans were drafted by him.[2] He even accompanied the emperor on all his tours. His ascendancy over the *Vakil* is revealed by the fact that in 1638 A.D. when Shah Jahan was confined to bed, only Afzal Khan was admitted to royal presence to apprise him of the state of the empire and consult him on important issues.

Afzal Khan was irreproachable in his conduct and admired by all. Shah Jahan often said that in twenty eight years of service he never heard a bad word from Afzal Khan against anyone. Chander Bhan Brahman who owed his rise to Afzal Khan says "inspite of personal capacity, literary merits and high position he was modest and unassuming"[3] Inspite of the position enjoyed by him, there is conclusive evidence to prove that Shah Jahan like his predecessor wanted his senior most officers to be subservient to him.

Islam Khan Mashhadi was appointed as *Diwan* in 1639 A.D. known for his ability and scholarship, he was rightfully called Sahib-i-Saifo-Qalam (master of pen and sword).[4] He himself suggested the

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1 Next to the Vakil, the most powerful officer was the Diwan, also called Vazir or Diwan-i-Kul. Besides being the head of the finance department, he was responsible for the working of other administrative departments and signed every important paper. Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 4, Manucci Storia do Mogor, Vol. II, p. 419; J.N. Sarkar, Mughal Administration, pp. 13,32-34, B.P. Saksena History of Shah Jahan of Dihli, p. 274.

2 Letters to Nazar Muhammad Khan, ruler of Balkh (sixth year); Letters to ruler of Iran (Sixth Year); Draft of treaty in the form of a farman to Adil Khan (Bijapur) (ninth year), Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badshahnama, Vol. II, pp. 466, 478, 203, quoted in Ibn Hasan, Central Structure of the Mughal Empire, p. 190.

3 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 695; Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin,p. 87.

4 Shiakh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin , p. 197.

name of his successor Sadullah Khan to the Emperor and chose to be transferred as governor of the Deccan.[1] This speaks volumes about the character and self-respect of Islam Khan.

Sadullah Khan was appointed to the office of *Diwan* in the nineteenth year of Shah Jahan's reign. Brought into politics by Shah Jahan himself,[2] he was the most learned and efficient official in the long line of Mughal *Wazirs*. He had an extraordinary capacity for the management of officers placed under his charge.[3] Sadullah Khan on account of his efficiency and integrity enjoyed the confidence of the Emperor and a general respect from subordinates. Under him, the Wizarat functioned with great efficiency.[4] Shah Jahan's letter written to Ali Mardan Khan at his death is the best attestation of a *Wazir*'s loyalty and worth in his master's estimation. Besides his departmental affairs Sadullah Khan performed active military service as well. A man of high learning,[5] Sadullah Khan's sudden death deprived Shah Jahan of his most trusted, loyal and efficient *Wazir*. Mir Jumla was appointed to the exalted office in 1556 A.D. in recognition of his talents as well on

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1 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara Vol. I, p. 695, The removal of Islam Khan suggests that Shah Jahan was always keen to appoint talented persons and once convinced of his assessment, people of lower calibre were relieved, Firdoz Anwar, Nobility under the Mughals, *1628-1658.*, p. 118.

2 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, pp. 644-646; Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badshahnama, Vol. II, ed. Maulvi Kabirudden and Abdul Rahim, Calcutta, 1867-68, pp. 219-220, quoted in Firdoz Anwar, Nobility Under the Mughals, (1628-58) p.118

3 Besides Persian and Arabic he knew Turkish language. Brahman worked as his assistant and writes about him, as he judged him from personal contact, not as a mere subordinate official. He says 'In learning and scholarship his presence reminded one of Abul Fazl.' Chander Bhan Brahman, Chahar Chaman, Eng. trans. Jadunath Sarkar, India of Aurangzib, p.232.

4 He is credited with reforms like creating Chaklas (circles) by grouping several parganas and placing each under an amin and faujdar.

5 "Agarche, Panjabi bud bisyar. Fazilat ba istidad dasht", Sadruddin bin Zabardast-khan, Irshad-ul-Wuzara, Ms. Or. 233 Fs. 64-65 quoted in Ibn Hasan, Central Structure of the Mughal Empire, p. 201.

در باب قضیه ان خان اسطور فطرت نا سپر قضا تا ثیر به
بنده های دولت مرقوم فرمودند نقل فرمان عالیشان که
اعلی حضرت خاقان زمان در باب قضیه علامة العصر
والدوران وزیر اعظم سعدالله خان به امرای والا
شان علی مردان خان امیرالامرای بهادر فرمودند
درین ایام خجسته فرجام که در دار الخلافه حضرت شاهجهان آباد
مستقر رایات جاه و جلال بود و نسیم بهار نسیم عیش و نشاط
بمشام فیض التیام میرسانید بحسب تقدیر سبحانی و گردش
آسمانی زبده ارباب راز لقا و ده نقاوه محرمان دمساز
یگانه دانشوران جهان قدوه خردمندان زمان وزیر
بی نظیر با تدبیر دستور حق شناس حقیقت پذیر سرامد
امرای حقیقت آیین سردفتر وزرای صاحب تمکین
دستور العمل دانایان روزگار علامه دوربین دانش
شعار جامع معقول و منقول حاوی فروع و الاصول مظهر

Shahjahan's letter to Ali Mardan Khan expressing his feelings at Sadullah Khan's death.

کمالات صوری و معنوی مستجمع صفات کسبی و وهبی
محک علوم نقاد سخن ادراک حقایق کشاف دقایق
گنج علم دریای معانی دستور اعظم وزیر معظم یار شمام
عیار رمز اجدان سعدالله خان که بعنایتهای گوناگون و مراحم
روزافزون ترتیب و پرورش در خدمت فیض موهبت مقدس معلی
یافته بمدارج علیا و مراتب اقصی فایز گردیده بود و خود در شاه
راه وفا و اخلاص منزل ساخته استرضای خاطر مقدس را بر جمیع مطالب
مقدم میداشت و حاصل مرادات دو جهانی و سرمایه عز و ارزندگانی خود را
منحصر در حصول رضای منیض مآثر اقدس می انگاشت روز شنبه
شهر جمادی الثانی سنه ۱۰۶۶ از جلوس میمنت مانوس جهان گذران
را گذاشته از تنگنای عالم جسمانی گذشته بعالم روحانی
شتافت از وقوع این واقعه و سنوح این سانحه غبار حزن
و ملال بر آینه ضمیر آفتاب مثال نشست و طبع نشاط آگین بلا
اختیار ملول متعرض گشت کاینش در حیز قابلیت و استعداد
و کمالات از مبدای فیاض کسوت:

عمر دراز و از حیات مستعار بهره کامل می یافت تا در عهد ابد قرین سعادت این مصدر خدمات نمایان گردیده در راه قبله و مرشد خود جانفشانیها می نمود و افسوس که ترکیب عنصری را ثباتی و اقامت مزیت و کاخ دنیای نا پایدار را اساس و استحکامی چون همواره از رضا بتقدیرات ایزدی پیش خاطر ملکوت ناظر است نزهت برای رضا و تسلیم خرامیده از جناب کبریا آمرزش آن رهرو مسلک بقا مسالت نموده بهم دخاطر فیض اثر السلامة ذات ملکی ملکات اقدس که باعث امنیت و جمعیت جهان و جهانیان و موجب آسایش و رفاهیت عالم و عالمیان است تسلی بخشیده ام.

Translation of Shah Jahan's letter to Ali Mardan Khan

This letter was written to Ali Mardan Khan on Sadullah Khan's death. Shah Jahan has shown his grief through this condolence message on the sad demise of Sadullah Khan to Ali Mardan Khan. In this message Shah Jahan has expressed his opinion and called Sadullah Khan a great patriot and able administrator who has been faithful and loyal to his majesty till his last breath. He was a very honest, noble and dedicated person and was respected by all sections of the society, whether the nobility or the common person of the empire. Whatever ministerial assignments were given to him he did his job honestly in a well organized manner which is an example for every minister and persons of lower rank. The kingdom, was handled very faithfully and efficiently by him.

Therefore his sudden demise is a personal loss to me (Shahjahan which cannot be filled. He was an unmatched personality. Other minister and officials should follow the ways, means and path shown by Sadullah Khan.

the recommendation of Aurangzeb[1] who had seen great potential in Mir Jumla during his stay in the Deccan.

One can easily identify that *Wizarat* under Shah Jahan was the culmination of a policy of recognition of merit that began under Akbar and Jahangir. The fact that six *Diwans* out of eight were non *Kahanazads* suggests that family considerations were not the main criteria for these appointments and the personal merit continued to be the basic consideration for selection to this office. The appointment of Diyanat Rai and Raghunath Rai even for short durations also eliminates the role of religion as a guiding principle in these appointments. It seems there was no fixed tenure of office during this time. The fact that both Afzal Khan and Sadullah Khan held office till their deaths shows that the tradition of a life-time appointment established by Jahangir continued. The inner working of the Wizarat shows that the system had greatly developed by that time and the details which are absent in *Akbarnama* and *Ain-i-Akbari* must have been incorporated later on.[2] There seems to be a change in the relationship between the emperor and his senior nobility as Shah Jahan was very sociable in his dealings with his *Diwan*s and tried to establish a good rapport with them.

By the time Aurangzeb ascended the throne, the experimental period of the institution had ended and the office had emerged as a full fledged institution. The head of the *Wizarat* designated as *Wazir, Wazir* –i-*Azam, Wazir-i-Muazzam* or *Diwan-i-Ala* enjoyed a very high political status but correspondingly lesser effective powers. They enjoyed a high

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1 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, part I, p. 191; Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 62; Jadunath Sarkar, History of Aurangzib, Vol. I, p. 120; Burton Stien, History of India,, O.U.P., 1998, p. 179.

2 There seems to be a link between Mansab and post. Diwans like Afzal Khan and Sadulla Khan were promoted to panj Hazari (5000 zat) before their appointment as Diwans. Others had already reached that mansab. This suggests that 5000 was the qualifying mansab for the post of Diwan during this period. Firdoz Anwar, Nobility under the Mughals (1628-58), p. 118.

position in administrative hierarchy and supervised all departments of the centre and provinces including control of land assignments and the grant of madadmaash land.[1]

Aurangzeb's long reign of almost fifty years was dominated by three powerful *Wazirs*. The first among them, Muazzam Khan originally called Mir Mohammad Saeed had played an active role in Aurangzeb getting his throne.[2] A great officer who was unrivalled in his age for judgement, far sightedness, wisdom and courage.[3] He spent most of his life fighting Aurangzeb's enemies. Infact both Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb utilized Muazzam Khan's unrivalled qualities of military leadership and unsurpassed knowledge of Deccan for their imperialistic purposes. Though he continued to hold the office he could neither influence nor control politics and in his absence his legal and formal duties were performed by his deputies.[4]

Aurangzeb's second Prime Minister, Jafar Khan, Umdat-ul-Mulk, was the grandson of Itmad-ud-Daulah. He was appointed to the Wizarat in 1663.A.D. and was highly respected by Aurangzeb.[5] However, no record of his intention to improve the condition of the

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1 It was a grant of land made in recognition of the need, piety, learning or family of the recipient.

2 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part 1, p. 205. He had been made Wazir-i-Azam in the last few months of Shah Jahan's reign. Manucci, Storia do Mogor, Vol. I, p. 228.

3 On account of the qualities possessed by him Aurangzeb had great regard for him and addressed him as "Baba" or "Babaji" – Francois Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire, p.29; Manucci, however, says he addressed Mir Jumla in this way in a false display of affection, Storia do Mogor, Vol. I, p. 240.

4 One of the great Shah Jahani and Alamgiri Wazirs, he on died April 12th, 1663 A.D. leaving behind a reputation of prudence and courage. Niccolao Mannuci, Storia Do Mogor, Vol. II, p. 94.

5 Francois Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire (1656-68), p. 271; Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Somaiya Publications Pvt. Ltd., 1977, p. 212. Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 722; Jadunath Sarkar gives the date of appoitment as 30th December 1666, A.D., History of Aurangzib , Vol. III, M.C. Sarkar and sons Calcutta, 1916, p. 65.

people stand to his credit. He was a powerless *Wazir* of a powerful emperor.

Nawab Asad Khan[1], entitled Asaf-ud-Daulah Jumdat-ul-mulk, who adorned the high office for more than three decades was the last and favourite *Wazir* of Aurangzeb. The author of *Maasir ul Umara* says he was made deputy *Wazir* in the thirteenth year of Aurangzeb's reign and promoted as *Wazir* only in the twentyseventh year.[2] During the intervening years Aurangzeb kept the powers of the *Wazir* in his hands.[3] Asad Khan was a very competent and influential *Wazir*. Such was Aurangzeb's confidence in him that he once mentioned "there is not, nor will there be any *Wazir* better than Asad Khan".[4] However, inspite of all his qualities and Aurangzeb's faith in him he was not allowed to assert himself and act independently. Inspite of his position Asad Khan never dared to question the authority of the emperor and preferred to shelve his personal ambition and always lent personal support to him.[5]

Although Aurangzeb has been criticised for his religious intolerance against Shias, he did not let his religious feelings influence the affairs of the state. The fact that all his *Wazirs* were Shia Muslims reflects that he was practical and rose above religious feelings in administrative matters. Excessive centralization of power in the hands of Aurangzeb and his preoccupation in the troubled affairs of Deccan prevented his *Wazirs* from making any contribution towards the growth of the departments they headed nor initiate any improvements in the

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1 It was the title given to him by Shah Jahan in the twenty seventh year of his reign. Manucci, *Storia Do Mogor*, Vol. I, p. 21.

2 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 271.

3 Syed Anees Jahan, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 262.

4 Letter quoted in Jadunath Sarkar, History of Aurangzib, Vol. V, p.222. Aurangzeb in another letter to his son writes "Although I shall leave behind me a very competent Wazir, who has come to the front in my reign and whom I shall have protected, yet what good will it do, as the four pillars of the Empire, viz., my four sons, will never leave that poor man to himself to do his work".

5 Laiq Ahmad, The Prime Minister of Aurangzeb, p. 143.

revenue administration. This could be accepted as a reasonable explanation of the general unrest that was to encompass the empire towards the end of Aurangzeb's reign.

By the time Aurangzeb died, the old pre-Mughal tradition of the *Wazir* being the premier noble at the court and the leading counsellor of the king apart from being the head of the financial administration had been largely established. Apart from this, the *Wazir*'s post carried with it a substantial following among the nobility and opportunities for personal gain. The *Wazir*'s office therefore became a coveted post and the target of intrigue and conspiracy in the seventeenth century.[1]

However, by and large upto Aurangzeb's time, inspite of the subtle changes in the character of the Wizarat, the *Wazir* posed no threat to monarchy. The personal capacity of the Mughal emperors and the immense prestige associated with monarchy prevented the *Wazir* from assuming overriding ambitions.

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[1] Satish Chandra, Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court, p. 62.

Chapter - III

ROLE OF PRIME MINISTERS IN EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION OF MUGHAL EMPIRE

The Mughal Empire was a powerful organisation based on constant military expansion. Since expansion through warfare was the primary concern of the Mughal emperors they invested a bulk of their resources on their military strength. This process of territorial expansion and consolidation depended as much upon the strategic perception of the emperors as well as their advisors.

In the absence of a clear cut demarcation between civil and military duties the emperors commanded the services of a body of 'warrior aristocrats' who functioned both as military commanders and administrative advisors. Since the imperial system depended heavily upon the warlike qualities and administrative skills of these officials the Mughal empire can be termed as a patrimonial bureaucratic system.[1] Based on Weber's model of the patrimonial state the regime was therefore seen as an extension of the household of the ruler, whose authority was an extension of that of the father in a patriarchal family.[2]

In their capacity as the leaders of the nobility and the aristocracy, coupled with their proximity to the monarch, different prime ministers made significant contribution towards territorial expansion and consolidation of the Mughal state; their wise deliberations often

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1 Stephen P.Blake, The Patrimonial Bureaucratic Empire of the Mughals, *Journal of Asian Studies*, 1979, pP. 77-94.

2 Douglas E. Streusand, The Formation of the Mughal Empire, O.U.P, New Delhi, 1989, p. 10.

contributing in a great way to the growth and stability of the Mughal Empire.

Nizamuddin Khalifa, Babur's Prime Minister during his four year tenure as ruler of northern India, who had served him for a long time prior to his coming to India, actually participated in all of Babur's military campaigns, evolving brilliant defence strategies and displaying brilliant statesmanship and organizing ability.

Mir Khalifa, belonged to a noble family of Khurasan. His father, Sultan Junaid Barlas, was one of the amirs of Sultan Hussain Mirza[1] and had been his most loyal and devoted companion, since Babur's Farghana days.[2]

Nizamuddin Khalifa played a significant role in the famous battle of Panipat, a contest between Babur and Ibrahim Lodhi that ushered the Mughal dynasty in North India. In the arrangement at the battlefield Nizamudin Khalifa commanded the left centre along with others like Khwaja Mir-i-Miran, Ahmad Parvanchi, Tardi beg, Quch Beg and Mirza Beg Tarkhan.[3]

The battle of Panipat was short and decisive in which superb tactics and able generalship of men like Khalifa won the war inspite of the vast numerical difference in the two armies.[4] When Ibrahim Lodhi

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[1] Babur, Baburnama, Eng. trans. A. S. Beveridge, Vol. I and II, p. 276.

[2] Mohibbul Hasan, Babur, Founder of the Mughal Empire in India,, Manohar, New Delhi, 1985, pp. 162-63; S.K. Bannerjee, 'Humayun's Succession to the Throne' The Indian Historical Quarterly, Vol. II, Calutta, 1935, p. 537.

[3] Babur, Baburnanama, Eng. trans.A.S. Beveridge,Vol. I and II, p. 472.; Wolseley Haig, The Combridge History of India, Vol. IV, S.Chand and Co., New Delhi, p. 12.

[4] The general view is that Ibrahim's army numbered a hundred thousand men as against twelve thousand under Babur, Babur, Baburnama, Eng. trans. H.Beveridge, Vol. I, p. 417; Muhammand Qasim Ferishtah, Tarikh-i-Ferishtah, Eng. trans. J.Briggs, History of Rise of Mahomedan Power in India till the year 1614; Vol. II, p. 44; Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. I, p. 440. But since many Chiefs had joined Babur, his army must have numbered twenty five thousand.

died along with sixteen thousands Afghans,[1] Amir Khalifa was given the task of burying him where he had fallen.[2] An indication of the degree of responsibility Nizamudin was entrusted with, can be had from the fact that it was he who was sent to Agra along with Amir Quli Beg to collect and forward to Babur a list of the property, valuables, treasury, horses, elephants, camels, tents, and slaves of the king.

Nizamudin Khalifa also rendered valuable service in the battle of Khanwa against Rana Sangram Singh. At a time when the Turkish army having heard a lot about the valour of the Rajputs, was totally demoralised, Nizamudin Khalifa remained unaffected by the general feeling of despair and frustration and supported Babur in rejecting the proposal[3] of not facing the Rana's forces.

The army was chiefly drawn by Amir Khalifa who also supervised the work of preparation for the battle. A unique feature of the preparations was the use of novel engines of wood, resembling tripods. When placed in line they provided a cover for the musketeers as well as arrest for the muskets. In ordering the army to make these instruments of war Nizamudin Khalifa, Babur's ablest general and right hand man was killing "two birds with one stone".[4] It strengthened Babur's army

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[1] Babur, Baburnama, Vol. I and II, p. 474. It says that according to estimates made later the number was forty thousand or fifty thousand; Mohibbul Hasan, Babur, Founder of Mughal Empire in India, gives the number of people killed as fifty thousand, p. 80.

[2] Ahmad Yadgar, Tarikh-i-Salatin Afghana, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. V, p. 30; Abdul Qadir Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. I, p. 442, states that Ibrahim was captured in the desert. This seems incorrect as all other sources say that he was killed at Panipat.

[3] Babur, Baburnama, Vol. II, p. 556.

[4] L.F. Rushbrooke Williams, An Empire Builder of the Sixteenth Century, pp. 146-147.

despite the disparity in the numerical strength of the two armies[1].

Although the position of Nizamudin Khalifa in the course of the battle is not known for certain[2] his role in Babur's success was tremendous. Eulogising Khalifa's services Babur remarked, "Khalifa did well in the campaign neglecting nothing of control, supervision, painstaking effort and diligence"[3] and was unremitting and indefatigable in his endeavours to put everything in order.

Nizamudin's support that contributed to the success at Khanwa established Babur's hegemony in Hindustan, shifting the centre of his power from Kabul to Hindustan. The next campaign undertaken by Babur was that of Chanderi,[4] where Khalifa's wholehearted support contributed to the Mughal success. Khalifa also accompanied Babur in his expedition towards the East. Khalifa whose opinion and advice was highly valued by Babur displayed brilliant statesmanship and organizing ability, a pre-requisite of a successful general. He evolved brilliant defence strategies and it was he alone who rose to meet the situation in times of extreme distress remaining unruffled and boldly supporting his master when all others buckled under pressure. He was

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1 Babur had twelve thousand men at Panipat but as various chiefs joined him the number must have increased. Shyamal Das Kaviraj, Vir Vinod, Vol. I, p. 364. and Mohibbul Hasan,Babur, Founder of Mughal Empire, in India, p. 91 give the Rana's forces as two hundred thousand horses and footsoldiers. Contemporary sources like Nizamuddin Khalifa, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol II, p. 31, n2 and Gulbadan Begum Humayan Nama, also mention two lakh as Babur's cavalry which seems to be an exaggeration.

2 Abul Fazl believes that the rear of carts was supervised by him, whereas Mohibbul Hasan feels Nizamuddin fought on the right side of Babur, Babur, Founder of Mughal Empire in India, p. 92.

3 Babur, Baburnama, Eng. trans. Vol. I and II, p. 556.

4 In 1520, Chanderi was seized by Rana Sangram Singh, who bestowed it on his protege and ally Medini Rao, Babur, *Baburnama*, Vol I and II, p. 593; Ahsan Raza Khan, "Babur's settlements of his Conquests in Hindustan, Part *I, P.I.H.C.*, Patna 1967, p. 210.

highly praised and rewarded for his services and the title of "Muqarrab al hazrat al Sultani al Darle Ae khaqan" was bestowed on him.[1]

Besides his contribution in territorial expansion, the credit of consolidation of Babur's empire also goes to Khalifa. Although Babur does not refer to Khalifa as *Vakil* or *Wazir*, contemporary sources do refer to him as the *Vakil* or 'Prime Minister'.[2] The circumstances in which Babur found himself were not favourable for a separation of civil and military duties. Thus, as Prime Minister of the empire Khalifa was the chief of administration,[3] holding charge of all civil and military affairs. He was endowed with all authority, enjoyed royal support and his command was like the command of a king.[4]

With rapid decline in the decision making faculties of the emperor during his last illness, Mir Khalifa had become the focus of all authority and Babur left the administration in his hands without going into the details himself.[5] Khalifa, the vice-regent was the Prime Minister who acted as a link between the sovereign and the heads of various departments. And his position was very similar to some of the *Wazirs* of the Turkish period.[6]

Humayun faced many difficulties in his endeavour to retain and expand Babur's conquests in India. The *Wizarat*, during his fragmented and unsettled tenure as emperor, also proved to be ineffective. His two

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1 Radhey Shyam Babur, p. 409.

2 Abdul Qadir Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh Vol. I, p. 451; Babur, Babur Nama, Eng. trans. Leyden and Erskine, p. 428; Nizamudin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. V, p. 187.

3 Babur, Baburnama, Beveridge Vol. I and II, p. 702,

4 Ahmad Yadgar, Tarikh-i-Salatin Afghana, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. IV, p. 38; U.N.Day, The Mughal Government, p. 32, Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, Mughal Polity, p. 105; Ibn Hasan Central Structure of the Mughal Empire, p. 120.

5 Yusuf Hussain, Two Studies in Early Mughal History, p. 91; Radhey Shyam, Babur, p. 410.

6 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Eng.trans. H.Beveridge; Beni Prasad, Vol. II, Part I, p. 220.

Wazirs, Hindu Beg in the first phase and Qaracha Khan (when Humayun as a royal exile was trying to rebuild his strength) did not contribute in any outstanding way towards military success. Infact, Sher Khan who acquired the throne of India in 1540 A.D. attributed his success against the Mughals to the treachery of his senior nobility. His view was based on his experience of Humayun's Wazir Hindu Beg.

One sees the development of the Mughal tradition of *Wazir* with political, financial and military powers revived in the early days of Akbar's reign on account of two reasons. Firstly, his ancestors both Babur and Humanyun had powerful *Wazirs* and secondly, Akbar at the age of thirteen could not alone muster the strength that was needed to face the enemies who endangered his position. Moreover, the exigency of the circumstances made necessary the appointment of an advisor with powers of a regent. In fact it was the dynamic personality and tireless endeavours made by Bairam Khan which established peace and brought stability in the country.

Bairam Khan was born in Badakhan and had moved to Balkh after his father's death. [1] Having entered Humayun's service at the age of sixteen years he rose to be a powerful Amir and companion of the Mughal emperor.

Bairam Khan's contribution, both in terms of territorial expansion and consolidation of the Mughal empire, that helped Humayun to regain the throne of Hindustan and Akbar to realize his ambition of building a vast and enduring empire based on a strong political system and an efficient administrative machinery is very significant. The history of Humayun from his defeat and exile till his restoration and

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[1] Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, Part I, p. 369.

death is in fact the history of Bairam Khan as the leading performer.[1] It was Bairam Khan who urged his master not to despair even when Humayun was at the lowest ebb of his career. He was also responsible for arranging help from the King of Persia.[2] His perceptive leadership was responsible for the success of the Mughals in the battles of Machiwara and the more decisive encounter at Sirhind. These battles decided the fate of the Afghans by undoing the work of Chausa and Kanauj making Bairam Khan the undisputed hero of Mughal restoration. Infact even after the defeat of the Afghans in these battles, there were ample reasons that could have made the reconquest of India by Mughals a virtual impossibility, had it not been for Bairam Khan's resolve and devotion. Therefore, his tenure as Regent and chief minister during Akbar's minority[3] has rightly been called the era of Bairam Khan when he ruled supreme with all the paraphennalia of royalty.[4]

Bairam Khan possessed tremendous ability, excellence, able generalship and vigour and above all was devoted to the house of Timur. At the hour of crisis, when Humayun died before giving any stability to the empire that was surrounded by enemies, it was Bairam Khan who by the sole influence of his courage, firmness and excellent arrangements made the stream which had left its course return to its

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1 Bairam Khan had been of tremendous help to Humayun in regaining the throne. Damodar Singh, "Bairam Khan and the Re-establishment of the Mughal Empire", Islamic Culture, Vol. LXXII, No. 2, 1998, p. 65.

2 Jauhar Aftabchi, Tazkirat-ul-Waqiat,, Eng. trans. p. 76.

3 There is reference to His Majesty Humayun exalting his trusted noble Bairam Khan with the dignity of the "Guardianship of the World Prince" in contemporary sources. Nizamudin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 136; Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol.I, pp. 343-347.

4 Abdul Baqi Nihawandi in his Maasir-i-Rahimi places Bairam Khan and his son Abdur Rahim on level with Mughal Royalty requiring special studies on their contribution as Mughal surrogates. Sukumar Ray, Bairam Khan, M.H.A. Beg. ed. Institute of Central and West Asian studies, Karachi, 1992, p. 128.

channel and re-established his sovereignty.[1] Akbar also entrusted the management of affairs to him and ordered that he should carry out what he thought proper and be without fear of any censure.[2]

Bairam Khan's greatest contribution by way of stability was in keeping Humayun's death a secret in order to prepare for the unopposed succession of Akbar, without any resistance. It was a very wise step as the troubles between Babur's death and Humayun's succession proved .In view of the abnormal times Bairam Khan thought it dangerous to keep the throne vacant and announced Akbar's succession to the throne immediately.[3] although his formal coronation took place three days later on 14th February, 1556 A.D[4]

Bairam Khan's role as Akbar's guardian was formidable in view of the rickety throne and vague kingdom the young prince inherited. All that they possessed were a few districts in Punjab. His greatness lies in managing Akbar's affairs, despite the unfavourable circumstances, in such an awe-inspring manner that gave the young boy of fourteen a terrific start to his career of conquest and consolidation and also ensured his success.

Bairam Khan's role in the second Battle of Panipat (1556 A.D.) is undeniable. Three days before the battle Bairam Khan held a Durbar in order to encourage the nobles and inspire them. Realising that the

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1 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 377.
2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 107.
3 Vamberry, Travels and Adventures of Sidi Ali Rais, pp. 56-58. Sidi Ali Rais was a Turkish admiral who arrived in Lahore in 1555 A.D. He spent a lot of time in Humayun's company and was preparing to go back but Humayun's sudden death forced him to postpone his departure. He was sent to Lahore by Bairam Khan to assure the people of Humayun's well - being to facilitate Akbar's accession, Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 5; Badoani, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh* Vol. II, p. 9.
4 Muhammad Arif Qandhari, Tarikh-i-Akbari, p. 44; Abul Fazl, *Akbarnama*, Vol. I, pp. 366-367; Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, Vol. II, p. 208; Abdul Qadar Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 1.

battle was to decide the future of the Mughals in India, he made the following speech to the nobles which reminds one of the memorable oration of Babur in a similar crisis before the battle of Khanwa:

> *"This is commencement of his Majesty's reign. This infidel has routed the whole army and is now making preparations against us. If you do your best in this business with one heart and soul, Hindustan is yours. I place my trust in God. If we fail in this, you whose homes are at a distance of about one thousand miles will not be able to find an asylum."*[1]

The success in the battle of Panipat raised the prestige of Bairam Khan and made him a virtual dictator. In 1540 A.D., when he had escaped after the battle of Kanauj he was one of the amirs whose part in the battle was insignificant. But after 1556 A.D., in the post battle of Panipat phase, the history of Mughal kingdom in India was the biography of Bairam Khan.[2] This was followed by the occupation of Delhi and Agra where huge treasures fell into his hands.

His next military success in the course of third and fourth years (1558-60 A.D.) was the consolidation of Akbar's dominion by bringing about the surrender of Gwalior in central India and the annexation of Jaunpur province in the east. This was followed by a campaign directed against Sikandar Sur leader of the Afghans, who was forced to take shelter in Mankot. Bairam Khan followed him into the hill country

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1 Sukumar Ray, Bairam Khan, p. 147.
2 Ibid., p. 148.

via Dasuya[1] and made excellent arrangements for the siege that lasted six months.[2]

The crushing of Afghan power, accompanied by military successes undertaken under the supervision of the all important Bairam Khan resulted in aggressive military activity bringing the vital strongholds of a compact region between Lahore, Delhi, Agra and Jaunpur under Mughal control. Elphinstone remarks, "The real restoration of the House of Timur may be dated from this period and had been brought entirely through the exertions of Bairam Khan whose power was now at the highest pitch ever reached by a subject."[3]

Bairam Khan played an equally important role in consolidating the position of Akbar as an undisputed emperor. He was aware of the precarious condition of the Mughal empire and also that at such times of political uncertainty aspirations and claims of individuals were likely to be fulfilled. The ruthlessness with which he eliminated any and everyone who showed the slightest disregard for imperial authority showed his determination to strengthen Akbar's position.

Incidents like the arrest of Shah Abul Maali[4], a very senior Mughal noble, who had shown signs of pride and rebellion by refusing to attend the Durbar held in honour of Akbar's accession goes to prove that Bairam Khan in his selfless devotion to the Mughal throne did not want to take any chances as far as royal authority was concerned.[5]

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1 A town twenty five miles north west of Hoshiarpur mentioned in Ain-i-Akbari Badoani, Muntakhab–ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 10 calls it Disuha.

2 Muhammad Arif Qandhari, Tarikh-i-Akbari, says the siege lasted eight months, pp. 77-78.

3 Elphinstone, History of India, , p. 496.

4 He belonged to a family of Sayyids of Tirmidh and was a man of dignity, intelligence and perception. Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, Eng. trans. Z.A. Desai, Part I, p. 55. Humayun honoured him by calling him his son, Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 2.

5 Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. III, p. 210; Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p.3; Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, pp. 15-16; Iqtidar Alam Khan "The Mughal Court Politics during Bairam Khan's Regency", Medieval India, A Miscellany, Vol. I, p. 23.



The Arrest of Shah Abu'l Maali

However, the enemity between Bairam Khan and Abul Maali could be traced to the battle of Sirhind where both of them had played an important part but the Khan-i-Khanan who was the moving spirit behind the success was not happy when Humayun out of fear of displeasing Abul Maali had refrained from giving due credit to him and cleverly ascribed the victory to Akbar.

The murder of Tardi Beg owing to whose feeble generalship the Mughals were defeated by Hemu at Delhi is yet another example of Bairam Khan's determination to assert and strengthen the position of Akbar. The Khan-i-Khanan saw that the destruction of Tardi Beg was essential in the interest of Akbar's authority and sent for him and had him put to death.[1]

Bairam Khan impressed upon Akbar that the execution of Tardi Beg was necessary as he had acted disloyally. Advising Akbar that compassion at such a crucial time would lead to dangerous consequences the *Vakil-us-Sultanat* made him approve of the severe measure. Abul Fazl does not fail to remark that the monarch left to himself would not have agreed to Tardi Beg being killed.[2] Ferishtah also observes that he understood from the best informed men of the time that had Tardi Beg not been punished by way example "such was the condition of the Mughal army and the general feeling of those foreigners, in the army that the old scene of Sher Shah would have been acted over again".[3] This terrifying example of inexorable power produced at least one good effect by way of absolute obedience replacing the earlier insubordination.

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1 Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. III, p. 215; Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. III, p. 7, says Tardi Beg was killed on account of his treachery. Nizamudin, on the other hand says there is no evidence of treachery against Tardi but he did display cowardice.

2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, pp. 52-53.

3 M.K.Ferishtah, Tarikh-i-Ferishtah, Eng.trans. J.Briggs as History of Rise of Mohamedan Power in India till the Year 1612, Vol. II, p. 189.

When Hemu, assuming the title of Raja Vikramjit, decided to fight the forces of Akbar (who was unsure of himself because of youth and inexperience) it was Bairam Khan who pledged by the soul of Humayun that he would be faithful to the young master.[1] The way in which he put Hemu, who had dared to challenge Akbar by becoming a competitor, to death goes to show that the *Wazir* enjoyed the power of asserting his decisions on his benefactor by forcing him to slay an infidel and win for himself the little of 'Ghazi'.[2]

Bairam Khan convinced Akbar by saying "as this is our first success let your own august hand smite this infidel with the sword". The prince acted accordingly and separated his head from his unclean body.[3] Muhammad Arif Qandhari, a contemporary in Bairam Khan's service who was also present, records that Akbar complied with the request of his Prime Minister and gave a blow of the sword to Hemu and Bairam Khan finished him off. The story of Akbar's magnanimity and refusal to kill a fallen foe seems to be a later invention which was approved by Akbar himself as he could not justify his action in his mature years.[4]

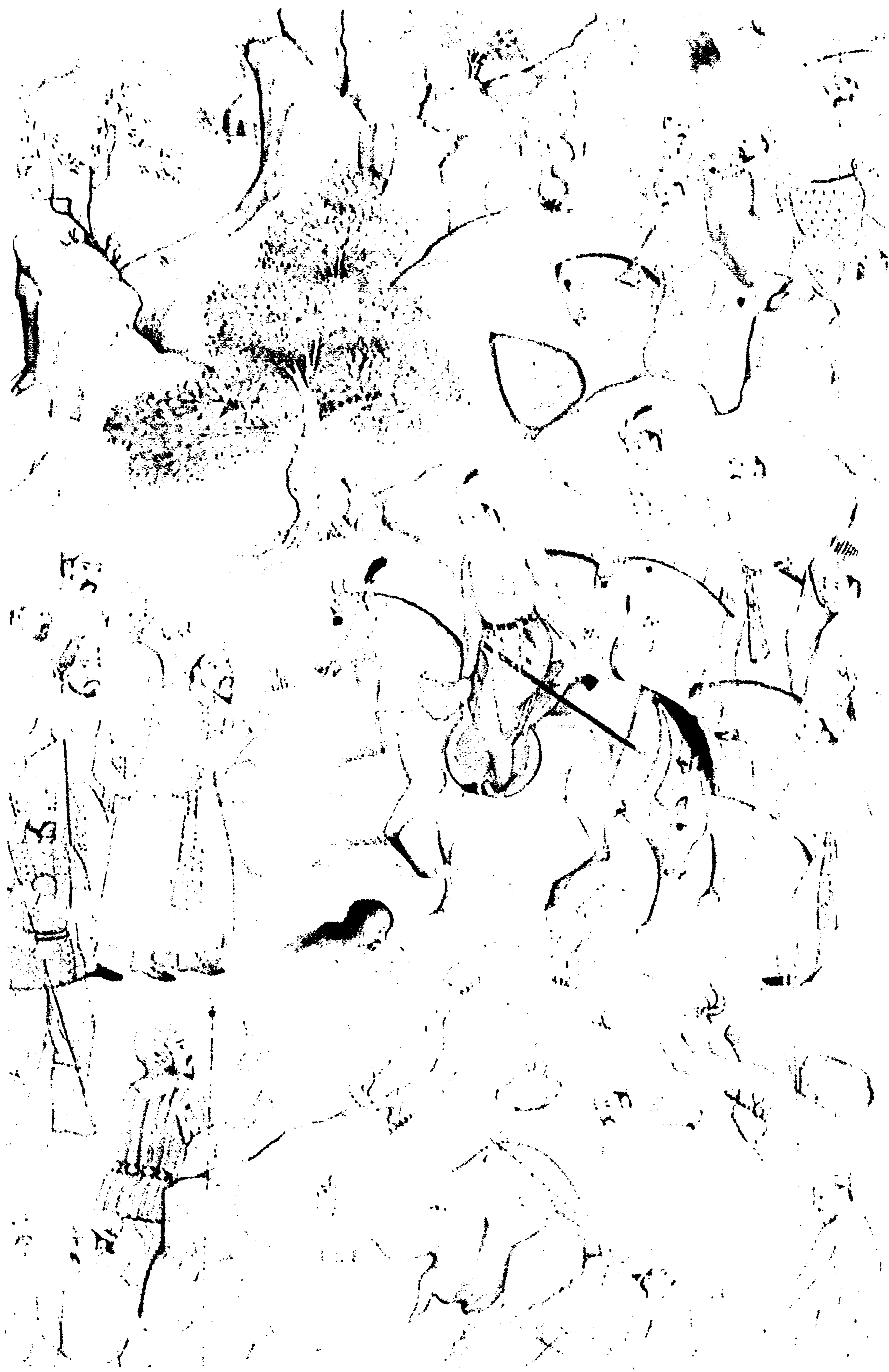
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1 M.K.Ferishtah, Tarikh-i-Ferishtah, Eng.trans. J.Briggs as History of Rise of Mohamedan Power in India till the Year 1612, Vol. II, p. 185.

2 A Champion, A hero especially one who fights against infidels.

3 Ahmad Yagar, Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afghana in Elliot and Dowson, Vol. V, pp. 65-66, but other contemporary writers are opposed to this. Ferishtah, History of Rise of Mahomedan Power, Vol. II, p. 189 says Akbar in order to fulfil the wishes of the protector drew his sword and touching the head of the captive with it became entitled to the appellation of Ghazi while Bairam drawing his own sabre severed the head of Hemu; Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 67, says Akbar refused to slay the captive saying that there was nothing meritorious before God in such an act and thereupon Bairam Khan drawing his own sabre severed his head; Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 9 says Akbar declined to slay Hemu saying "why should I strike him now that he is already dead"?. Bairam Khan then performing an act of religious warfare, was the first to strike his sword into Hemu's body and following him Gada-i-Shaikh, and others made an end of Hemu. However, V.A.Smith, Akbar, p. 39, and Wolsely Haig, Cambridge History of India,, Vol. IV, p. 72, accept the view that Akbar slew Hemu at the behest of his protector.

4 Sukumar Ray, Bairam Khan, p. 146.



3. Himu is brought bound before Khan-Khanan and Akbar (*Akbar-nama*, Chester Beatty Museum, Dublin). Artist: Pandarnath.

Bairam Khan as *Vakil-us-Sultanat* also played an equally important part in streamlining the administrative process that was to be perfected by Akbar in later years. From this point of view his four year dominance reveals an intensive feature in the administrative history of northern India. He exercised all the sovereign powers in the name of the king who was behind the veil and the rule was that of the *Vakil.*[1] He advised Akbar on appointments, dismissals, promotions and demotions. Although financial affairs were not under his direct control yet he received the returns from the heads of all financial departments and kept their abstracts.[2] He and his group of supporters came to control the entire machinery of the state at the centre as well as in the provinces.

Bairam Khan's dominant status as Akbar's '*ataliq*' and Prime Minister with all powers of administration and patronage left to his direction aroused the jealousy and opposition of the old Turkish nobility who resolved to get rid of the protector at any cost.[3]

The four year regency of Bairam Khan was momentous for the history of India as well as to the reign of Akbar as it was during this period that despite the chaotic condition of the empire the young Akbar was securely placed on the throne of Delhi, internal dissidence stamped out and a regular administrative structure set up. It was the result of Bairam Khan's efforts that the Mughal empire, notwithstanding its initial weakness, came to embrace the whole of Punjab and Multan, the territory of Delhi, the present Uttar Pradesh, including Jaunpur, Dholpur, Gwalior, Ajmer and Nagpur. Akbar

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1 Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p.13.
2 Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 4; Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 93.
3 Mohd Arif Qandhari agrees that he did commit certain deeds which offended the Emperor and in January-February 1560 he had finally acceded to do away with those conspiring against him. Tarikh-i-Akbari, *p. 83.* The date given by Arif Qandhari is the same as in Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 94 and Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 36.

always nurtured feelings of love and kindness towards his gaurdian to whom he owed his throne. One of his farmans throws light on the feelings of the Emperor. [1]

There could be no better testimony to Bairam Khan's worth than that recorded by the bigot Badaoni who could seldom see any good in a Shia.

> *"In wisdom, generosity, sincerity, goodness of disposition, submissiveness and heartily he surpassed all ... the second conquest of Hindustan and the building of the empire were due to his strenuous efforts, his valour and his wise policy".*[2]

If Babur founded the Mughal Empire and Humayun lost it, Bairam Khan regained and restored it.[3]

In terms of their contribution towards the expansion and consolidation of the Mughal Empire in Akbar's time the role of the Hindu nobility was of immense value. Raja Todar Mal who occupied the highest place among them served the Mughal house with distinction and can easily be placed among the best of Akbar's nobles. Playing a multifarious role in civil and military affairs, Todar Mal excelled in both. His talents were recognized by Akbar who took him into confidence with regard to some very important administrative and political decisions of the time.

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1 "..... whenever he acts according to this order we shall clear our heart with regard to him and entirely forgive his crimes and offences, and as his services are still appreciated and approved by us though he has received a thousand favours equal to them we desire that his name which has for years been celebrated in all countries for sincerity, devotion, obedience and reliability may not become notorious for rebellion, contumacy and sedition", Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 161.

2 Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 265.

3 Damodar Singh, 'Bairam Khan and the Reestablishment of the Mughal Empire'. Islamic Culture, Vol. LXXII, 1998, p. 73.

Akbar had decided against appointing a *Vakil* after the transfer of Muzaffar Khan to Bengal in 1579 A.D., but the vacancy was filled in 1582 A.D. by the promotion of Todar Mal who had held the post of Ashraf-i-Diwan[1] and had distinguished himself as a soldier and general, a diplomat and above all a financier. No other individual in Akbar's reign, not even Muzaffar Khan, was equally at ease in all branches of administration as Todar Mal was.

Todar Mal, a talented man of comparatively low origin rose to occupy the highest office in the empire by virtue of what Abul Fazl calls his "incomparable courage, administrative skill and freedom from avarice". The first and only Hindu to become Prime Minister (*Vakil*) under any Mughal emperor, he came to symbolise the socio-religious priorities Akbar believed in. His appointment justifies the emperor's all consuming desire to bind Hindustan into a bond of unity that rose above race and religion.

Todar Mal was the son of a poor peasant of the village of Laharpur in Oudh and was a Lahori Khattri.[2] While working under Sher Shah he gave evidence of great clarity of thought and capacity. When power shifted from the Afghans to the Chagtais, Todar Mal continued in state service until Akbar recognising in him a genius for statecraft entrusted him with responsible positions from where he rose until his appointment as Mushrif-i-Diwan — a capacity in which he earned undying fame for himself and his master. Owing to his devotion and

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1 Also, known as the Mushrif-i-Diwan, it was a post higher than that of revenue minister but lower than that of Prime Minister, A.L. Srivastava Akbar the Great, Vol. I, p. 76.

2 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Pt.II, p. 951, says it is not sure whether Raja was born in Lahore in Punjab but the statement that he was a Lahori Khattri is correct for it is admitted by the people of Laharpur that his father was a Punjabi Khattri who came to Lahorpur and married the daughter of a Chepari Khattri and that Todar Mal was born there. Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, pp. 376-379; Kumud Rajan Das, Raja Todar Mal, Calcutta, 1979, pp. 102-103.

competence he gradually became one of the most influential hindus of Akbar's court.[1]

The Raja's role in territorial expansion of the Mughal empire can hardly be over emphasised. Early in his career, he was instrumental in Mughal victory over Chittor[2] in 1567 A.D.. Todar Mal who was incharge of one section of the army fought with great zeal and along with Qasim Khan he supervised the construction of 'sabats'.[3] So diligently was he involved in the campaign that he took neither rest nor food for one day and two nights. Their efforts were crowned with success when Chittor fell after a siege of six months.[4]

Akbar's confidence in Todar Mal's ability as a general of great excellence is also revealed from the fact that when Akbar was contemplating the second expedition to Bengal and deployed a large army for the purpose, he appointed Todar Mal, who was known for his trustworthiness and reliability, to assist Munim Khan.[5] Though the leadership and planning in this campaign were Khan-i-Khanan's share yet in the actual campaigning, encouraging the soldiers, making dashing marches, chastising the recalcitrant and opposing the forces, the Raja played a more distinguished part.[6]

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1 The others were Mansingh, Bhagwan Das, Bidhi Chand, Jaimal Kachwaha etc. A.L. Srivastava, Akbar the Great, Vol. I, p. 75.

2 Chittor was ruled by Rana Udai Singh, son of Rana Sanga.Abul Fazl , Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 202; Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 214; Muhammad Arif Qandhari, Tarikh-i-Akbari, p. 152.

3 Sabats were covered pathways that helped besieger to reach the walls of the fort in case of a siege.. Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 344; Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 471.

4 Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 104; Abul Fazl says, "The Seige started on 19th October and ended on 24th February. So the time span was four months and few days. Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 314; Nizamuddin Ahmad Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 218; Muhammad Arif Qandhari, Tarikh-i-Akbari, *p. 150.*

5 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 58; Muhammad Arif Qandhari, Tarikh-i-Akbari. p.237.

6 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part. II, p. 952.

Since the conquest of Bengal was a prolonged one, Todar Mal was entrusted with the duty of reporting to the emperor about the strength and temper of troops and their state of preparedness. When Munim Khan was appointed governor of Bengal, Todar Mal was associated with him.[1] The enthusiasm and whole heartedness with which Todar Mal was involved in building up of the Mughal empire can be ascertained from the Battle of Takaroi in Orissa. Even when Munim Khan was seriously injured and Khan-i-Alam was killed, Todar Mal remained unnerved, and raised the morale of the soldiers by the following words,

> *"The ray of Shahin Shah's fortune is shedding light on the head of the courageous servants, if the days of one are ended and if the feet of another have slipped --- the breeze of victory is about to blow and light of success is emerging from the Horizon of hope".*[2]

Todar Mal showed exemplary resolve in holding firm against the enemy and prevented the Afghans from destroying the Mughal army. This victory permitted Akbar to formally annex Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. After the battle ended, Todar Mal in his farsightedness and political maturity saw no sense in the peace negotiations with Daud. His apprehension proved correct as subsequent events showed that Daud was insincere. However, Iqtidar Alam Khan attributes Todar Mal's resistance to a selfish motive since Orissa had been promised to him as jagir by Akbar.[3]

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1 One of the highest distinctions were conferred on this Hindu, when the alam and Naqqira, an imperial banner and kettle drum were given to him. Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 98; Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 376; Shah Nawaz Khan Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II, p. 952.

2 Kumud Ranjan Das, Raja Todar Mal, discusses the Bengal - Bihar Campaign of Todar Mal in detail, pp. 47-48, and pp. 97-118; J.F.Richards, The Mughal Empire, p. 33.

3 Iqtidar Alam Khan, Political Biography of a Mughal Noble - Munim Khan, Khan-i-Khanan, p. 78.

Later, when trouble broke out in Bengal,[1] Akbar deputed Todar Mal and Khan-i-Jahan, the governor of Punjab to recover Bengal. Their exertions, skills and capacities led to imperial victory.[2]

The loyalty and devotion with which Todar Mal served the cause of strengthening the Mughal empire is also revealed in the successful restoration of normalcy in Gujrat. Since *Wazir* Khan, the governor, had failed to deal with the peculiar political and administrative problems of the province after the famine of 1574-75 A.D., Akbar deputed Todar Mal who strove in a laudable manner to give respite to the country. When he was engaged in carrying out the Emperor's orders, Muzaffar Hussain Mirza tried to create disturbance[3] but Todar Mal living upto his master's expectations stood firm against the enemy and was ultimately crowned with success.[4]

When disorder in Kashmir became prolonged and a number of Akbar's officers were killed, the emperor deciding to wage a war against the rebel Afghan tribes was convinced that none other than his Prime Minister Todar Mal should be entrusted with 'operation revenge'. The expedition was to be led along with prince Murad, but Todar Mal knowing fully well the handicaps of a joint command submitted discreetly that the prince should not be exposed to the hazards of

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1 Todar Mal's suspicion of Daud's disloyalty had proved correct. After Munim Khan's death Daud took advantage of the situation and created disturbance. But ultimately fear of Akbar and Todar Mal's tactful handling of the situation proved sufficient to meet the situation. Muhammad Arif Qandhari, Tarikh-i-Akbari, p. 250.

2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 250; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part 2, p. 952; Muhammad Arif Qandhari, Tarikh-i-Akbari, p. 251 A.L.Srivastava remarks, "Thanks to the splendid exertions of Khan-i-Jahan and Raja Todar Mal, Bengal which had for centuries been the home of rebellion (Bulghak Khana) was conquered for good", Akbar the Great, Vol. I, p. 180.

3 Nizamuddin Ahmad says Muzaffar Hussain was the son of Ibrahim Hussain Mirza who was the grandson of Kamran Mirza. He became the centre of disturbance, Tabaqat-i Akbari, Vol. II, pp. 500-502.

4 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 294; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II, p. 953.

warfare. Akbar read the message[1] and cancelled the appointment of Murad. Todar Mal, a great general that he was, led the imperial army with extreme caution, built forts as he progressed, avoided frontal attacks on Afghan positions and ultimately succeeded in inflicting heavy losses on the enemy.

Again when in 1587 A.D. Akbar learnt that the province of Badakshan had been captured by the Uzbeks who also threatened Kabul, he sent two armies under Raja Birbal and Bhagwan Das but since both these armies were driven back, Akbar as a last resort sent his dependable commander, Raja Todar Mal, in assistance with Man Singh. The Raja manoeuvered with great caution and was successful in completely defeating the tribes in the Khyber pass proving that his able generalship could put life in the Mughal army.

Despite the confidence that Akbar had in his abilities as a general and administrator, it is difficult to ascertain whether Todar Mal enjoyed all the powers of his office. Since it was against Akbar's policy to make the Prime Minister head of the administrative setup, the Raja must have exercised the powers of the *Vakil* whom Islamic jurists call the *Wazir* of second category. Nevertheless Akbar had full faith in his abilities and turned to him for advice on all important matters, and Todar Mal on his part fulfilled the duties of his elevated office with ability, extraordinary diligence and loyalty.

In 1589 A.D. Raja Todar Mal sent a petition to Akbar that since old age and sickness had prevailed on him he should be allowed to retire from service. Akbar who knew that the Raja was keeping indifferent health, agreed to his request but changed his mind and

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1 Abul Fazl Akbarnama, Vol.III, p. 733, says Todar Mal represented to Akbar "..... is it proper that auspicious son (Murad) should be sent to conquer distant countries and to subdue great rulers and that the present work should be made over to a servant". He also revealed his love and concern for the royal family in this way.

asked him to come back as "no worship of God was equal to the soothing of the oppressed.[1] How indispensable Raja Todar Mal had become for the Empire can be gauged from this fact that even Akbar felt his presence essential to carry on the work of administration effectively. However, Raja died very soon[2] in November, 1589 A.D.

With the exception of the Sufi brothers, Abul Fazl and Faizi, Raja Todar Mal was the most competent official in imperial service. He was unquestionably the most distinguished among hindus wielding his pen as well as his sword with equal skill. Even Abul Fazl who criticised the Raja for his orthodoxy admitted that in "uprightness, straight forwardness, service, kind nature, arranging expeditions, courage, zeal and administration of Indian affairs he was unique in his age".[3]

Todar Mal as Akbar's subordinate worked in complete accordance with his sovereign's ideals and goals.[4] Their way of thinking was similar, so were the ways in which they wanted to transform their plans into concrete achievements. If Akbar genuinely desired to strengthen his empire by bringing two major communities (Hindus and Muslims) close to one another, Todar Mal made use of the administrative machinery at his command[5] to assist him and facilitate the process of building a vast and enduring empire.

Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan, who was appointed Prime Minister after Todar Mal was not very influential in administrative measures but his talents as Akbar's military commander who made a significant contribution in territorial expansion of the empire is noteworthy. Abdur

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1 Abul Fazl Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 861.
2 Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 628; Abdul Qadir Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 383.
3 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 862.
4 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II, p. 945.
5 By making it compulsory to keep all records and accounts in Persian he urged Hindus to achieve proficiency in Persian and aspire for responsible offices in the Government.

Rahim was the son and heir of Bairam Khan, an illustrious noble of Akbar who rose to be the *Vakil*-us-Sultanat of the Empire. Born in Lahore in 1556 A.D.[1] he was only four years old when his father fell a martyr at the hands of the Afghans in Pattan in Gujarat. The young boy was taken into Akbar's care[2] and on account of his father's valuable services became acceptable to all and was later on to be adorned with the title of Khan-i-Khanan, once enjoyed by his father. In 1576 A.D. he was raised to the Mansab of 4000 and appointed governor of Gujrat.[3] Abdur Rahim, also called Mirza Khan, served Akbar in several military assignments like the campaign against Mewar led by Bhagwan Das and Man Singh. He was successful in punishing miscreants and establishing peace in the vicinity of Ajmer where the killing of an important official by the nephew of Raja Bharmal had created disturbances.

Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan, made a significant contribution in establishing Akbar's authority and sway in Gujrat. When Sultan Muzaffar of Gujrat, taking advantage of some discontentment among imperial officers, over Akbar's policies, expelled the Mughal governor and captured Ahmedabad in 1583 A.D., Akbar sent Abdur Rahim for the task of defeating him. [4] Keeping in mind the group rivalries within the nobility, Akbar sent only those nobles with him who had no affinity with those who were hostile to Abdur Rahim. In an engagement at Sarkhej, three kilometers from Ahmedabad, the Mughal army under

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1 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 76; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 50.

2 Ibid., p. 203; Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 250; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I , p. 50; Munshi Debi Prasad Kayastha, Khan-i-Khanan Nama, Institute of Central and West Asian Studies, Karachi, 1990, p. 20.

3 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 236; Ali Muhammad Khan, Mirat-i-Ahmadi, pp. 113-114, quoted in Afzal Hussain, Nobility under Akbar and Jahangir – A study of Family Groups, p. 28.

4 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 632. Abdur Rahim was given the charge of the centre. Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 168.

Abdur Rahim defeated Muzaffar Gujarati who fled, while many of his men were slain.[1] Muzaffar made another attempt at raising sedition but was defeated and expelled from imperial territories.[2] Akbar honoured Abdur Rahim with the title of Khan-i-Khanan with a robe of honour, a jewelled belt, a dagger and also conferred on him the tumantogh'[3]

Abdur Rahim after sending a body of men in pursuit of Muzaffar occupied himself in "arranging the affairs of the soldiery and raiyyat in Gujrat".[4] Muzaffar Khan was not captured and continued to fight tenaciously at Kutch and Kathiawar and was arrested only after ten years in 1593 A.D.

The Khan-i-Khanan was also responsible for extending Akbar's influence over Sindh in 1592 A.D, the imperial army including a hundred elephants and a park of artillery besieged the fort of Sehwan and moved forward to Nasrpur. On learning that Mirza Jani Beg, backed by all the zamindars of the province, was marching forward with almost hundred warships, canoes and artillery, the Khan-i-Khanan showed exemplary courage by carrying on fight although he had just twenty five warships. [5] When Jani Beg raised an entrenchment around his army, Abdur Rahim erected batteries that slew the enemy's men despite the entrenchment. The siege continued for two months and the imperial army inspite of being reinforced with money, weapons and

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1 Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, Eng. trans. Z.A. Desai, p. 23.; Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 573.

2. Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, pp. 452-453; Abdul Qadir Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p.172; Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, Vol.I, pp. 31-34.

3 The Turkish dictionary meaning of tumantogh is a "banner of highest dignity". Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 578; Badaoni says he was made Panj Hazari. Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 643 says Abdur Rahim was raised to the rank of Panj Hazari but does not mention tumantogh. Abdul Baqi Nihawandi, Maasir-Rahimi, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 241.

4 Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 632; Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, The Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, p. 23.

5 Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, The Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, p. 25.

artillery, suffered great scarcity and hardship.[1] In another attempt Mirza Jani Beg fortified himself at Anwarpur (Unarpur) about twenty five kilometers north-west of Sindh . The Khan-i-Khanan's unfailing efforts reduced Jani Beg to such a painful state that he was forced to submit to him and in all humility accompanied him to court to render homage to Akbar.[2] He even agreed to give his daughter in marriage to Mirza Iraj, Abdur Rahim's son. [3] Abdur Rahim was honoured with many royal favours and rose to the Mansab of four thousand. He even received Thatta as his fief.

Following the conquest of Sindh, Akbar wanted to acquire Qandahar[4] as an effective possession of the fort was essential for the successful defence of Akbar's North-Western frontier and for the smooth flow of commercial relations with the West. Although Qandahar was under Muzaffar Hussain, but on account of his internal quarrel with Rustam Mirza, it had become an easy target for the Uzbeks. A strong force was deputed for the conquest of Qandahar under the generalship of Abdur Rahim[5] whose reputation as a great military leader frightened Muzaffar Hussain and forced him to surrender. Abdur Rahim's success resulted in pushing the North-Western frontier of the empire to the Hindukush mountains which was recognized as the boundary between Mughal Empire and Turan by Abdullah Khan Uzbek the ruler of Transoxiana in 1594 A.D.[6]

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1 Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 632.

2 Ibid, p. 650; Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 399; A.L. Srivastava, Akbar The Great, Vol. I, p. 366.

3 Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, The Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, p. 27; Afzal Hussain, Nobility under Akbar, A Study of Family Groups, p. 32.

4 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Eng. trans. Vol. III, p. 886. Since Humayun had given it to Shah Tahmasp, Akbar had so far not thought of taking it back.

5 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 887, Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 402.

6 A. L. Srivastava, Akbar the Great, Vol. I, p. 398.

Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan, was also actively involved in Akbar's plan of the conquest of the Deccan[1] although Akbar could not acquire much success in the area during his life time. The first foray of the Mughals in the Deccan had been as early as 1561 A.D. when Pir Muhammad entered Khandesh in pursuit of Baz Bahadur, the ruler of Malwa. When Akbar was chastising the rebels in Malwa, he demanded the submission of Khandesh and received a princess as bride to the Mughal court as a symbol of its submission. On account of several preoccupations he ignored the Deccan for the next twenty seven years. However in 1591 A.D., he revived the issue of allegiance from Bijapur, Golkunda and Khandesh.

Akbar's correspondence with Abdur Rahim in this regard is proof of the emperor's confidence in the Khan-i-Khanan's advice on the matter. In a farman addressed to Abdur Rahim there is a long description of the Deccan problem and Akbar consulting him about the proposed campaign. [2]

When in 1595 A.D., a chaotic succession struggle in Ahmadnagar provided an opportunity for the Mughals to enter the Deccan, it was Abdur Rahim who along with Prince Murad as leader of the campaign was sent there.[3] However, the imprealists were repulsed and the siege was lifted in March 1596 A.D., the main reason being the failure of prince Murad and Abdur Rahim as joint commanders to act together. It is believed that during the course of the campaign Abdur was not very keen on seizure of Ahmednagar and infact some of his

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1 Abdul Baqi Nihawandi, Maasir-i-Rahimi, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI, p.241.

2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, pp. 741-42.

3 Ibid., p. 1045; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 55; Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, pp. 445-447, quoted in Afzal Hussain, The Nobility under Akbar and Jahangir, A Study of Family Groups, p. 33.

associates were secretly helping the enemy.[1] It was in these circumstances that the imperial forces withdrew from Ahmednagar. When Murad died in 1599 A.D. and was replaced with prince Daniyal as Mughal viceroy, again it was Abdur Rahim who was asked to accompany him.

In an attempt to establish Akbar's sway in the Deccan, fresh attempts to besiege the fort of Ahmednagar were made in 1600 A.D.. Chand Bibi who proposed an agreement was murdered and the siege continued. Miyan Khwaja Suhail headed the combined forces of the four principalities of the Deccan and confronted the Khan-i-Khanan who had just about twenty thousand horsemen with him. It was in this battle that the Khan-i-Khanan displayed exemplary courage. Miyan Suhail was successful in killing many soldiers of the royal army and demoralising the rest, but Abdur Rahim along with his horsemen remained steadfast in the battlefield. When his subordinate, Miyan Daulat Khan asked the Khan-i-Khanan where to find him in the event of retreat the Khan replied "find me under the corpses of the killed, rest assured that there is no errand (before me) but to die".[2] The royal army eulogized their leader's courage and attacked Suhail Khan with such force that his army was forced to retreat and all the elephants, artillery and guns fell into the hands of the imperial army. The vanquished Suhail Khan left the battlefield to save himself. Akbar honoured Abdur Rahim, by marrying his daughter to prince Daniyal.

The Khan-i-Khanan became the Mughal viceroy of Deccan after Daniyal's death in 1604 A.D. However his intervention in the struggle between Malik Ambar and Raju Deccani was not in imperial interests

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1 Von Noer gives a graphic account of the differences between Abdur Rahim and Murad in The Emperor Akbar, Vol. II, 1973, pp. 350-353.

2 Farid Shaikh Bhakkari, The Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, p. 30; Abdul Baqi Nihawandi, Maasir-i-Rahimi, Eng.trans. Elliot and Dowson,Vol. VI, p. 242, also discusses the Khan-i-Khanan's military achievements in Deccan.

and caused some embarrassments for them, leading to suspicions of Abdur Rahim not being loyal to he Mughal cause.[1]

At the time of Akbar's death, Abdur Rahim was serving in the Deccan along with his two sons Mirza Iraj and Darab Khan but the Khan-i-Khanan was unsuccessful in preventing the Deccan from throwing off the Mughal yoke and even failed to prevent the conquered territories from being lost. After his accession in 1606 A.D., Jahangir sent Abdur Rahim to the Deccan in 1608 A.D.[2] but despite the promises, no success could be achieved and the Khan-i-Khanan was on the contrary held responsible for the reverses suffered by the imperialists.

Jahangir was fortunate like his father in having the services of efficient *Wazirs* who helped in carrying the administrative reforms of Akbar and contributing towards the strengthening of the political set up. Among these Mirza Ghias Beg better known as Itmad-ud-Daulah,[3] Jahangir's *Wazir* from 1611-1622 A.D. made a significant contribution towards providing vitality to the empire, although his name is not associated with high powered military successes. Every contemporary writer has borne testimony to the sterling qualities[4] of this *Wazir* who was known as the open ear of the court and who by reputation was just, fair and compassionate. Itmad-ud-Daulah was exceptionally well educated and skillful in both writing and transacting business.[5]

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1 Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, p. 31. It is believed that the Khan-i-Khanan had friendly relations with the Deccan rulers and had been declared a rebel by Abul Fazl, Radhey Shyam, Life and Times of Malik Ambar, Delhi, 1968, p. 69.

2 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. II, p. 60.

3 Itmad-ud-daulah was a title given to Nur Jahan's father by Jahangir on his accession. It meant pillar of the government.

4 Beni Prasad, History of Jahangir, Indian Press Pvt. Ltd., Allahabad, 1922, p. 123.

5 Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, Eng. trans.Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 404; A.K. Sarkar, "Itmad-ud-Daulah, A sketch of his Life and Career", Quarterly Review of Historical Studies, Vol. X, 1970-71, pp. 154-164.

Mirza Ghias Beg was the son of Khwaja Muhammad Sharif who was the chief minister of Sultan Beglar Begi of Khurasan.[1] He enjoyed the same position under Qazaq Khan, son and successor of Beglar Begi. He later got the favour of Shah Tahmasp Safavi and was appointed minister of Yezd, a province in Persia. On the death of his patron in 1577 A.D., Ghias Beg seeing no possibility of any opening for himself decided to migrate to Hindustan.[2] He faced great hardships on the way and finally met Malik Masud[3] who directed him to the court of Akbar at Fatehpur Sikri. He began his career with an appointment by Akbar to a modest mansab of three hundred horse and rose to become the Diwan-i-Buyutat, incharge of buildings, at the Imperial court in 1596 A.D.[4]

It was undoubtedly his fate that brought him from a position, where he was on the verge of destruction in his native place to the helm of affairs in one of the most magnificent empires of the times. On Jahangir's accession in 1605 A.D. Mirza Ghias Beg was, honoured with the title of Itmad-ud-Daulah, 'pillar of the government', and a mansab of 1500.[5] Successive promotions followed in the next few years, and in 1611 A.D. when Jahangir married Mehrunissa, Itmad-ud-Daulah in recognition of his past service and competence was made the

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1 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II, p. 1073; Abul Fazl, Akbar nama, Vol. I, p. 432; Mutamad Khan describes Beglar Begi as Muhammad Khan Taklu, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 403.

2 Ghias Beg's failure to get a foothold in his country can also be attributed to the political chaos and confusion that followed the death of Shah Tahmasp Safawi. A.K. Sarkar, "Itmad-ud-Daulah, A Sketch of his Life and Career", Q.R.H.S, Vol. I, p. 154.

3 Malik Masud, a man of notable background was the caravan leader who relieved Ghias Beg's family of their misery. Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, p. 1073; Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 573; Beni Prasad, History of Jahangir, pp. 159-160; C. Pant, Nurjahan and her Family, Dan Dewal pub. Allahabad, 1978, p. 27.

4 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p. 45; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II, p. 1073; C. Pant, Nurjahan and her Family, pp. 32, 163; Jadunath Sarkar, Mughal Administration and R.P. Tripathi, Some Aspects of Muslim Administration, discuss in detail the duties of Diwan-i-Buyutat.

5 Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 402; Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, pp. 22, 45; C. Pant, Nurjahan and her Family, pp. 34-35.

Wazir.[1] For the first time since Jahangir's accession a single man was appointed chief *Wazir* of the empire in the real sense of the word.[2] This change in the existing state of affairs reflects Jahangir appreciation of Itmad-ud-Daulah's extraordinary talent and unquestionable efficiency.

Itmad-ud-Daulah's appointment to the *Wizarat* is generally viewed as a direct outcome of the marriage of NurJahan with Jahangir for his advancement in subsequent years cannot be fully explained without reference to this matrimonial alliance. The suggestion that the good fortune of Itmad-ud-Daulah's family was solely due to Nur Jahan's influence comes from early chroniclers like Mutamad Khan, Shahnawaz Khan, and Mutammad Hadi and is endorsed by later writers; but recent researchers like Nurul Hasan,[3] Chandra Pant,[4] Rekha Misra,[5] and K.S. Lal[6] have questioned their theory by arguing that the rise of the family had begun during the reign of Akbar and only strengthened by the matrimonial alliance and dedicated service on the part of Itmad-ud-Daulah's family.

Itmad-ud-Daulah was not only a loyal courtier but a minister whose services, as Jahangir often remarked, were conspicuously

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1 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri,Vol. I, p. 200; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, part II, p. 1074; Alexander Dow, The History of Hindostan from the death of Akbar to the Settlement of the Empire under Aurangzeb, Vol. III, p. 35.

2 Ashok Kumar Sarkar, "Itmad-ud-Daulah, a sketch of his life and career" Q.R.H.S., Vol. X, p. 157. No family ever rose so suddenly or so deservedly to rank and eminence than that of Itmad-ud-Daulah's after the marriage of Mehrunissa with Jahangir. Alexander Dow, The History of Hindostan, from the death of Akbar to the settlement of the Empire under Aurangzeb, Vol. III, p. 34.

3 Nurul Hasan, "The Theory of the Nur Jahan Junta", P.I.H.C., 1958, pp. 324-335.

4 C.Pant, Nurjahan and her Family, pp. 50-52, dispels the commonly prevalent myth .... that during the reign of Jahangir power was wielded entirely by Nur Jahan who used this power for boosting her family's position.

5 Rekha Misra, Women in Mughal India, 1526-1748, Munshiram Manohar Lal, 1967, p. 34, argues that "the existence of a Junta is not fully supported by contemporary or other reliable documents and that the theory is based on speculation and not substantiated by facts."

6 K.S. Lal, The Mughal Harem, Aditya Prakashan, New Delhi, 1988, pp. 79-82, believes that it is unjust to assign pure political aspiration to Nurjahan's acts of interference in political matters. He highlights the non-political and altruistic traits of Nur Jahan's personality.

intelligent, judicious and dependable. Jahangir often acclaimed his unusual perceptiveness and complemented him on the dedication towards the Mughal ruling house. He remarked :

> *"He was a wise and perfect Wazir .... Though the weight of such a kingdom was on his shoulders no one ever went to Itmad-ud-Daulah with a petition or on business, who turned from him in an injured frame of mind. He showed loyalty to the sovereign and yet left pleased and hopeful him who was in need. In fact this was a speciality of his."*[1]

The general state of affairs under Itmad-ud-Daulah's tenure as *Wazir* was one of peace and prosperity for the empire which contributed to giving it strength and at the same time freeing the emperor from the major responsibilities of government. Itmadud-ud-Daulah enjoyed the total confidence of the emperor who held his *Wazir's* goodwill towards him very dear. He was of immense help to the emperor in deciding important matters like the release of Diyanat Rai from the Gwalior fort where he had been a captive and return his confiscated property[2] to him. On Itmad-ud-Daulah's advice Raja Man Singh was appointed the leader of the army that was to attack the fort of Kangra[3]

As the pivot of the country (Madar-ul-Mulk), Itmad-ud-Daulah enjoyed special privileges and was rewarded with honours that no other minister on record had ever seen. Acknowledging him as a well wisher of the royal family, Jahangir even allowed the women of the harem to go

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1 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. II, p.222. Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama–i-Jahangiri, Eng. trans.Elliot & Dowson , Vol. VI, p. 404.
2 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, , p. 303.
3 Ibid., Vol. I, p. 336.

unveiled before him.[1] Jahangir's regard for Itmad-ud-Daulah is also reflected from his once removing the imperial turban from his own head and placing it on Itmad-ud-Daulah as a special honour.[2]

If Jahangir showed extraordinary favours to Itmad-ud-Daulah it was more due to his immense faith in the latter's administrative ability than to the matrimonial alliance with his daughter. As Beni Prasad remarks. "He would have risen to high office in any circumstance but since he became the emperor's father-in-law his ascent in the hierarchy was extra-ordinarily rapid."[3]

Scholars are not unanimous in their opinion about the extent of Jahangir's interest in the affairs of the state but contemporary writers do agree that he allowed administrative responsibilities to drift off his hands.[4] The disintegration of a state ruled by an inactive and indulgent emperor like Jahangir was not uncommon in the medieval times but such a possibility was largely prevented by the astuteness and efficiency of Itmad-ud-Daulah.

In terms of his contribution towards strengthening of Mughal empire it would be improper to say that he brought about a radical change in the administrative set up. Nevertheless he contributed to a great extent towards the smooth running of the administrative machinery by regulating the internal affairs of the country and providing it with a cohesion that enabled to steer the country out of

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1 "By directing the ladies of the Harem not to veil their faces from him, I bestowed everlasting honour on him." Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri,, Vol. I, p. 351; Alexander Dow, The History of Hindostan from the death of Akbar to the Settlement of the Empire under Aurangzeb, Vol.III, p. 53.

2 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p. 378.

3 Beni Prasad, History of Jahangir, p. 120.

4 Francisco Palsaert, Jahangir's India, The Remonstrantie of F.Palsaert, Idarah-i-Adabiyat-i-Delli, 1972, p.50, says "He (Jahangir) is king in name only.... The king does not trouble himself with public affairs but behaves as if they are no concern of his."

danger. An idea about his hold on the administration and his role in the building up of the empire can be had from the fact that at his death a great sense of loss was felt by the kingdom.

Itmad-ud-Daulah had been, except for some financial irregularities,[1] a man of impeccable character. His unquestionable loyalty to the emperor brought him admiration even from his adversaries. Although other contemporary chronicles are silent about the administrative measures adopted by Itmad-ud-Daulah, Alexander Dow observes :

> *"agriculture which had been neglected was encouraged, many provinces dislocated by former disturbances and wars were cultivated, security of property was given to the farmer, the industry of the mechanic was protected. The country assumed a new face. The useful arts were revived and flourished in the cities .... the revenue of the empire gradually increased .... No distinction was made in the administration of justice between Mahomedan and Hindu."*[2]

However, we cannot accept Dow's statement completely, especially when one takes into account the picture of agricultural conditions provided by the contemporary chroniclers and foreign

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1 Greed was perceived as one of his few faults. Muhammad Hadi said, "Mirza Ghias Beg was so charitably disposed, that no one ever left his door dissatisfied, but in the taking of bribes, he was most uncompromising and fearless, Tatimma-i-Wakiat-i-Jahangiri, Eng.trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 397; Van Den Broecke, A contemporary Dutch Chronicle of Mughal India, trans. Brij Narian and Shri Ram Sharma, Calcutta, 1957, pp. 39-40.

2 Alexander Dow, the History of Hindostan, from the Death of Akbar to the Settlement of the Empire under Auragzeb, Vol. III, pp. 37-38.

travellers where conditions of peasants were described as far from satisfactory.[1]

Itmad-ud-Daulah's courage and genius lay in strengthening of the polity. All contemporary writers bear witness to his active participation, long experience in imperial service, remarkable self control, undisputed sincerity, and farsightedness which made him an astute politician of the age. It is quite possible that Nur Jahan who is credited with shaping imperial policies during the period of her ascendancy could not have shouldered all responsibility without her father's guidance and support.

Itmad-ud-Daulah's loyalty to the Mughal throne is also reflected from his continuing to look after the affairs of the kingdom and ordering of civil and military matters even after the death of his wife Asmat Begum[2] who had been his strength and constant companion. He died three months and twenty days after her death.[3] Beni Prasad remarks, "from a penniless adventure he had risen to the first place in the most magnificent empire of the world and left a name for himself in sagacity and learning".[4] The whole empire mourned the death of the *Wazir.* The following verse reveals the emperor's feelings through this terrible event :

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1 Palsaert, Jahangir's India, The Remonstrantie of F. Palsaert, writes "so much is wrung from the peasants that even dry bread is scarcely left for them for their food." He further writes peasants were so cruelly and pitilessly oppressed that the fields lay unsown and grew into wilderness, p. 47.

2 The factors that contributed to his personal rise to power were his innate qualities and the cooperation that he received from his gifted family .... the assistance of his wife Asmat Begum being of inestimable value in this respect. Ashok Kumar Sarkar, "Itmad-ud-Daulah, A Sketch of his Life and Career", Q.R.H.S, Vol. X, p. 151.

3 Jahanagir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. II, p. 223.

4 Beni Prasad, History of Jahangir, p. 173.

"By the reckoning of the eye there is one frame less.
By wisdom's reckoning the lessening is more than thousands.[1]

Noted for his intelligent grasp of the complexities of a situation Itmad-ud-Daulah's blend of severity and moderation, feeling for the distressed and above all devotion to the throne endeared him to the people who looked upon him as a father figure and it was the love and respect that he received from the emperor and his friends that was immensely responsible for making his career so successful as well as meaningful to the Mughal throne.

Ever since the reorganization of the administrative system under Akbar, the *Vakil* had disappeared as an administrative officer and the title was retained as an honorific one[2] and the office of the Diwan emerged as one of prime importance in the Mughal bureaucracy [3]

Sadullah Khan, a reputed scholar, was brought into politics by the emperor himself.[4] He was a scion of a rather obscure family of Chiniot[5] in the Lahore province and a descendent of Bani Tamin Quraish.[6] A man of great intelligence and judgment, Sadullah Khan was first appointed to the revenue ministry on the recommendation of Sadr-i-Sudur, Musavi Khan. After his appointment as Mir Saman in 1643 A.D., he rose to the post of Diwan-i-kul in 1645 A.D. which he

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1 The couplet comes from Budag's elegy on Abul Hasan Nahid Balki, Aufi's Labab – ul-Albab, vide, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. II, p. 222.
2 Asaf Khan was the last noble who was appointed as Vakil under Jahangir.
3 Shabbir Ahmad Siddiqui, "Relations between Dara Shikoh and Sadullah Khan", P.I.H.C., 1986, Ibn Hasan, Central Structure of Mughal Empire, p. 190.
4 Firdoz Anwar , Nobility under the Mughals 1628-1658, p. 188, Sadullah Khan's, reputation as a scholar had come to the notice of the Emperor during his visit to Lahore.
5 Chiniot was situated on the bank of the river Chenab and was in the Jhang District. Imperial Gazettter X, p. 284. It is called Jhanwat in Irwin's translation of Manucci's Storia Do Mogor.
6 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II, p. 637.

continued to hold till his death in 1656 A.D.[1] This long tenure of almost eleven years remains unsurpassed during the reign of Shah Jahan.

Sadullah Khan's rise was primarily due to his personal merit, efficiency and loyalty. Being a non-Khanazad and a personal choice of the emperor it indicated the recognition of merit against distinctions of birth, rank and wealth. His ability coupled with devotion to service made him receive a constant and consistent rise in Mansabs. When appointed Prime Minister he was raised to the rank of 5000 and finally achieved a high mansab of 7000,[2] a rank he continued to enjoy till his death.

Sadullah Khan was actively involved in military service to the Mughal empire. Shah Jahan had always been keen to test the limits of Mughal power by recovering the Timurid homelands in Central Asia. After a request from the Uzbek ruler Nazar Muhammad Khan, Shah Jahan sent Murad against Balkh in 1646 A.D. The prince was able to conquer Balkh. However, within a month, owing to inhospitable conditions in the area the prince wanted to return. When Shah Jahan failed to convince him against returning he sent none other than his efficient *Wazir* Sadullah Khan to take charge of country and entrusted him with its entire management as well as making the revenue settlement of the province.[3] The set of instructions issued to

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1 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II, p. 639; Inayat Khan, Shahjahannama, trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p.118; Firdoz Anwar, Nobility under the Mughals - (1628-58), p. 118.

2 Shabbir Ahmad Siddiqui, "Relations between Dara Shukoh and Sadullah Khan", P.I.H.C., 1986, p. 273.

3 Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badshahnama, Eng.trans. Vol. VII, Elliot and Dowson, says although the King on account of the confidence he reposed in Sadullah Khan and power of decision he possessed, never tolerated his separations from the court, yet need was felt for a trusted person who might possess such a position and experience that all might rely upon his word and action ..... and entertain fear at his disapproval; hence the King decided to send Sadullah Khan to Balkh.

issued to Sadullah Khan[1] indicate the position he enjoyed and the trust Shah Jahan had in his abilities. Sadullah Khan finished his work in twenty two days and returned to Kabul in September 1646 A.D.,[2] after restoring order and tranquility and rescuing the country from a dismal state. The emperor rewarded him with a khilat and a thousand increase in mansab[3] for effectively carrying out his orders. Soon afterwards on the occasion of lunar weighing he was promoted to the rank of 7,000 with 7,000 horses and gifted an Arab horse with a golden saddle.[4]

Similarly when Shah Jahan received the information that Qandahar had been taken over by Shah Abbas of Persia he ordered Aurangzeb and his trustworthy Diwan, Sadullah Khan to advance to Qandhar with thirty five famous Amirs and their contingents,[5] Sadullah Khan obeyed the orders implicitly and planned his strategy well. With remarkable enthusiasm, in spite of considerable loss of lives he constructed trenches and dug mines. He opened siege by pushing on five divisions of the army. In the end he was able to break Persian offensive but this was the only relieving feature of the first Qandhar expedition. The siege dragged on but was ultimately abandoned on Sadullah Khan's advice. A second attempt to capture Qandhar in 1652

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1 He was instructed to: (a) inquire into the conditions of the people and reduce the rent if necessary.(b) to award compensation for damage caused by army (c) to advance loans to those in need (d) to recommend cases for increments. Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badshahnama, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 71.

2 Lahori, Badshahnama, trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 70; J.N. Sarkar, History of Aurangzeb, Vol. I, Chapter VII; B.P. Saksena, History of Shahjahan of Dihli, Central Book Depot, Allahabad, 1958, p. 201; J.F. Richards, The Mughal Empire, p. 132.

3 Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badshahnama, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 71.

4 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II, p.641; Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 71, says Shah Jahan never gave the mansab of 7,000 to more than four persons at one time, only when one of them died was another officer given this mansab. In 1656 A.D. The amirs who held this rank were, Jumdat-ul-mulk Sadullah Khan, Ali Mardan Khan, Sipah Salar Saeed Khan Bahadur and Islam Khan. Shabbir Ahmad Siddiqui "Relations between Dara Shirkoh and Sadullah Khan", P.I.H.C., 1986, p. 273.

5 Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 46; Inayat Khan, Shah Jahannama, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, pp. 87-88.

A.D. under the leadership of Sadullah Khan and Aurangzeb reveals the emperor's faith in the ability of his general.[1] But inspite of the best of efforts no useful result was obtained. However, in both these military endeavors Sadullah Khan showed his capacity and skill in the management of the field, organization of seiges, erection of murchals (entrenchments for besieging fortified walls) and other necessary arrangements.

When Shah Jahan was called upon to settle the trouble brewing up in Chittor, where Rana Raj Singh, son of Rana Jagat Singh was making some gates and lofty bastions (yagan) in violation of the treaty signed between Jahangir and Rana Amar Singh against any repair of the fort even by his descendents, he sent a huge force of thirty thousands troops under the leadership of Sadullah Khan to demolish the repairs and bring Raj Singh to submission.[2] Sadullah Khan complying with the orders of the emperor attacked the country and raised the old and new bastions of Chittor to the ground. The Rana's submission was marked by sending his eldest son, the 'Sahib-i-tika' to carry his apologies to court[3] as desired by the emperor.

Sadullah Khan's contribution in various expeditions where his services were called upon were different from the services of his predecessors in similar circumstances. Whereas their association with their office ceased when they left court as military generals, Sadullah Khan went in the capacity of the first minister and exercised his power and discretion in that capacity. Very often it was his personal prestige

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1 Inayat Khan, ShahJahannama, Eng.trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 99; Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 55.
2 B.P. Saksena, History of Shah Jahan of Dihli, p. 320.
3 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II, p. 643.

and influence that was considered invaluable in taking right and speedy decisions.[1]

Sadullah Khan contributed significantly in strengthening the empire by the way in which he conducted himself within the circle of the nobility in general. He knew well that constant bickering within court circles could weaken the empire and always maintained cordial relations with his colleagues. In the words of Farid Bhakhari, "Sadullah Khan behaved in such a way that everyone used to praise him".[2] Shah Nawaz Khan also remarks that Sadullah Khan did justice to the people and in his dealings with them was always honest.[3] Inspite of his great influence he was a very polite man. Whatever may be the allegations of the foreign travellers about his political ambitions, Sadullah Khan was undoubtedly a loyal person who never crossed his limits.

Sadulah Khan, despite his gentle temperament and honesty, was not liked by prince Dara Shukoh. Once when the prince rebuked Sadullah Khan for turning down his request for the grant of certain sum of money as irregular, Shah Jahan censured his son and expressed his appreciation of the *Wazir*'s action. The Ruqqat-i-Alamgiri is quoted as expressing Shah Jahan's disapproval of Dara Shikoh's conduct.[4] However since this set of evidence comes from a source which was openly hostile to Dara Shukoh (despite being an important one) it cannot be relied upon entirely. Yet, since such complaints had no

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1 Inayat Khan, Shah Jahannama, Eng.trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, pp. 103, 104; Wolseley Haig, The Cambridge History of India,, Vol. IV, Mughal Period, S.Chand and Co., New Delhi, 1963, p. 207.

2 Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, Eng. trans. Z.A.Desai as Nobility under the Great Mughals, Sundeep pub., New Delhi, 2003, p. 190; Shabbir Ahmad Siddiqui, "Relations between Dara Shikoh and Sadullah Khan, P.I.H.C., 1986, p. 274..

3 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II, p. 645.

4 This is a collection of letters of Emperor Aurangzeb and exhibit the private life and sentiments of the Prince. There are three collections of his letters: The Kalimat-i-Taiyibat, Rakaim-i-Karaim and Dastur-i-Aml Agahi.

adverse affect on the position enjoyed by Sadullah Khan as Diwan one can imagine his estimation in the eyes of the emperor and his position of being almost indispensable for the smooth working of the polity.

Sadullah Khan has often been regarded as the best Diwan in the long line of Mughal *Wazirs*.[1] The fact that Shah Jahan's reign has been looked upon as the golden age of the Mughal empire owing to the peace and prosperity it witnessed till the onset of the war of succession was to a some extent the contribution of his able Diwan Sadullah Khan who ran the administration with good judgement and ability.

Chandra Bhan Brahman's[2] work Chahar Chaman gives a lot of information on the working of the administration under Sadullah Khan.[3] His comments, coming from an eminent Hindu scholar and public servant who knew Sadullah Khan personally, give an indication of the admiration in which Mughal rule was held by the Hindus.

The death of Sadullah Khan at a time when turmoil, as a result of the ensuing war of succession between Shah Jahan's sons began to surround the Mughal empire, deprived the monarch of the services of his most trustworthy and efficient advisor. This surely was the time when Sadullah Khan could have been of enormous help to the emperor.[4] Shah Jahan's letter (illustration Chapter II) written to Ali Mardan Khan at the death of Sadullah Khan is a proof of the *Wazir*'s

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1 Francois Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire, p.23, calls him most able and upright Minister that ever appeared in India. In an assessment during Aurangzeb's time, of able ministers of the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan namely Abul Fazl, Itmad-ud-Daulah, Asaf Khan and Sadullah Khan, it is Sadullah Khan who occupies the highest position. Ibn Hasan, Central Structure of the Mughal Empire, p. 201.

2 The author was officially connected with four great Diwans and was on intimate terms with them. Under Sadullah Khan he held charge of the draft of farmans and in this position was in direct touch with the Emperor as well. Hence he was highly qualified to express views upon the working of the Diwan's office.

3 Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 61.

4 Inayat Khan, Shah Jahannama, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 118, says, "The monarch, the appreciator of worth, expressed intense regret at the demise of that deserving object of kindness and consideration....."

کمترین بندگان بموجب حکم معلی
از هم زبانان دوستکامان آن خان فضایل مرتبت بود
اکثر اوقات در صحبت آن خان قدرشناس از نقطهٔ شام
تا صبح صادق بیک دماغ بسر میرفت که شب بیدار و صبح
خیز بود و با وجود شغل وزارت شغل باطنی داشت و در
عین تعلق دم از بی تعلقی میزد و در هنگامی که سعادات جلیلی
آن خان والاشان صورت انجام یافت و آمده بر مسند
دولت نشست نگاهی بر ایوان زرنگار نموده آهی برکشید
از آنجا که آسیای انقلاب فلک همیشه در گردش است
و پیر و جوان و دانا و نادان دانهٔ این آسیا است آن
علامهٔ جوان بخت پیر تدبیر در دار الخلافهٔ شاهجهان
آباد در عین جوانی و کامرانی بعالم جاودانی شتافت
اعلی حضرت خاقانی در ایام عارضهٔ آن وزیر بی نظیر از
غایت مهربانی و قدردانی بمنزل آن وزارت وزیر
شایسته تشریف ارزانی فرموده عنایت و قدردانی
خود را بر جهان و جهانیان ظاهر و آشکارا گردانیدند

Chandra Bhan Brahman's account of Sadullah Khan as his companion

Translation of a note written by Chandra Bhan Brahman

This is a note written by Chandra Bhan Brahman who had been a companion of Sadullah Khan. In this note he has expressed his views which he gathered during his companionship with the minister. He says Sadullah Khan acted bravely in crucial circumstances and solved all problems faced by the ministry. He never lost his temper. He used his mind and heart to solve every problem. Any kind of challenge was a simple thing for him because he always had the support of every high ranking personality and common man in the empire. In difficult times he has always seen with a smile on his face, and without any tension. He was highly respected by the Mughal emperor, ministers and other officials. Therefore he will be remembered for his hard work and dedication in the history of the Mughals.

dedication in providing strength and stability to the Mughal dynasty and the emperor's acknowledgement of his work.

Mir Muhammad Saeed, better known as Mir Jumla,[1] was an energetic, ambitious and self made man who left a great impact on the history of the subcontinent. He was the son of Syed Mirza Hazru, an oil merchant of Isfhan, the old capital of Iran.[2] Conditions of poverty forced him to migrate to Golkunda one of the richest and most prosperous kingdoms of the Deccan.[3] On account of his entrepreneurship he obtained lucrative diamond mining concessions and became a prominent member of a group of Persian traders and ship owners in Golkunda. Credited with unusual organizational skills he aspired for political power. Under what has been called a system of 'political capitalism" officials in Golcunda were heavily involved in commerce and shipping[4] using political power to improve their commercial interests. Mohammad Saeed rose from the post of Sardaftardar[5] (Keeper of Records) to that of the exalted office of *Wazir* of Golkunda state in 1638 A.D.[6]

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1 Mir Jumla was a 'post' to which Mir Muhammad Saeed was promoted to by Abdullah Qutb Shah of Golconda on account of his administrative qualities and indefatigable energy. Henceforth the eptithet became synonymous with his name, H.K.Sherwani, "Administration, International conduct and social conditions under Abdullah Qutb Shah", (1626-72), J.I.H., VOl. XLIV, 1966, p. 6

2 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part I, p. 188; Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, Life of Mir Jumla, the General of Aurangzeb, p. 1; H.K. Sherwani, "Reign of Abdullah Qutb Shah", J.I.H., Vol. XLV, 1967, p. 53; J.B. Tavernier, Travels in India, Vol. I, Lahore, 1888, p. 165.

3 Manucci, Storia do Mogor, Vol. I, p. 223; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part I, p. 188.

4 Sinnappah Arsaratnam, Merchants Companies and Commerce on the Coromandal Coast,, 1650-1740, O.U.P., Delhi, 1986, p.225.

5 H.K. Sherwani, "Administration, International Conduct and Social Conditions under Abdulla Qutb Shah", (1626-72) J.I.H.,Vol. XLIV, p. 7

6 Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 62; J.N. Sarkar, Life of Mir Jumla – The General of Aurangzeb, p. 347; J.F. Richards, The Mughal Empire, p. 156.

A talented military strategist and diplomat, Mir Jumla conquered large areas of Karnataka and by 1652 A.D. he controlled Golkunda, a kingdom nearly forty thousand square kilometers in area with an annual revenue of forty lakhs a year.[1] However, his growing wealth and power which overshadowed the grandeur of the Sultan caused suspicions in the mind of his master Abdullah Qutb Shah who was persuaded by his nobles to bring about his elemination.[2] He escaped an assassination attempt against himself and turned to the Mughal empire to 'negotiate a position for himself and his newly founded domains in another state system'.[3]

Aurangzeb, the Viceroy of the Deccan and an excellent judge of men always wanted to utilize Mir Jumla's unrivalled qualities of military leadership and unsurpassed knowledge of the Deccan affairs for his own imperialistic purposes. He persuaded Shah Jahan to give assistance to Mir Jumla as "Golkunda together with what Mir Jumla had occupied in the Karnataka, with the choicest and rare things in abundance would fall into the hands of the emperor".[4]

On Mir Jumla's appeal and Aurangzeb's recommendation, Shah Jahan sent a farman to the general, appointing him to the rank of 5000 Zat/5000 Sawar and the Mughal title of Muazzam Khan and on his arrival at the court he was appointed to the office of *Wazir*.[5] The

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1 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part I, p. 188; Inayat Khan, Shah Jahannama, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 108; J.F. Richards, The Mughal Empire, p. 156.

2 Tavernier, Travels in India, Vol. I, p. 165; Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire, p. 16; Manucci, Storia do Mogor, Vol. I, p.223.

3 J.F. Richards, The Mughal Empire, p. 156.

4 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part. I, p. 189; Inayat Khan, Shah Jahannama, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, VOl. VII, p. 108; Muhammad Salih Kambu, Amal-i-Salih, Vol. III, p. 213, quoted in Laiq Ahmad, Prime Ministers of Aurangzeb, p. 41.

5 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umana, Vol. II, part I, p. 181; Muhammad Salih Kambu, Amal-i-Salih, Vol. III, p. 231; Muhammad Kazim, Alamgir Nama, Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 179; Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 68. Henceforth he is referred to as Muazzam Khan, although some scholars continue to call him Mir Jumla.

territory of Karnataka was also bestowed on him as rent free land for seven years. Herein began a phase of undying devotion towards the territorial expansion of the Mughal empire by Muazzam Khan. Initially, Shah Jahan wanted to depute this fearless general to the recovery of Qandhar but Muazzam Khan succeeded in diverting the emperor's attention from the Northwest to the Deccan with the assurance that he would very soon make Shah Jahan the lord of the Coromandel and Girzellin (Ginjili)[1]. Tempted by the prospects of acquiring large tracts of the Deccan, Shahjahan made Mir Jumla, the leader of the Bijapur campaign of 1657-58 A.D.

Muazzam Khan left for the Deccan in December 1656 A.D.[2] and on reaching Bidar opened the seige of the fort once considered to be the strongest in the Deccan. The imperial forces under his superior generalship were successful in capturing the well defended fort which was the key to the victory over Deccan.

Muazzam Khan's next military endeavour was aimed at Kalyani. Though the Bijapuris defended themselves with chivalry they suffered heavy casualties and were defeated in August 1657 A.D. The emperor honoured his *Wazir* with a special robe and some mahals of Karnataka territory yielding a revenue of four crore of dams.[3] Complete victory over Bijapur was not a unachievable object for a general of Mir Jumla's calibre but Dara Shikoh out of jealousy convinced Shah Jahan to ask

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1 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part I, p. 192; Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire, p.22; Manucci, Storia do Mogor, Vol. I, p. 229. The Coromandel Coast began at Negapalam and extended up to mouth of Godavari and ended at the pagoda of Jagannath on the Orissa coast.

2 It is said his son Mohammad Amin Khan was asked to officiate in his absence with the help of Rai Rayan Raja Raghunath who had been an assistant of famous Wazir Sadullah Khan. Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part I, p. 192; Amal-i-Salih, Elliot and Dowson. Vol. VII, p. 125; Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 69; Inayat Khan, Shah Jahannama, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 119.

3 Plural of dam, it was a small coin. Forty dams made a rupee.

them to conclude peace with Adil Shah and return to court.[1] Taking advantage of Shah Jahan's illness he took control of the administration and dismissed him from the office of *Wazir* on charges of disobedience.[2]

On account of the vague reports of the emperor's illness the political situation remained uncertain and Aurangzeb got Muazzam imprisoned only to prevent him from being approached by Dara Shikoh or Shah Jahan.[3] However after the situation turned in his favour and he acquired the throne in July 1658A.D., he immediately issued orders of Muazzam's release, apologised for his conduct[4] and restored all his property to him.

Muazzam's devotion to his master and zeal to serve the Mughal throne is evident in his immediate departure to the most crucial military expeditions aimed against Shah Shuja.[5] Soon after his reinstatement, the imperial army was arranged according to the advice given by Muazzam Khan. On seeing Shuja's army better placed, he went about encouraging his men all the time and raised their morale.[6] His superb generalship is also seen when despite the panic in the Mughal camp, Muazzam Khan showed no signs of anxiety and engaged himself in preparing his men for the impending battle, Aurangzeb

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1 Muhammad Kazim, Alamgirnama, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 179.

2 Laiq Ahmad, Prime Ministers of Aurangzeb, p. 53.

3 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part I, p. 193; Muhammad Kazim., Alamgirnama, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 180.

4 Shah Nawaz Khan Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part-I, p. 194; Khafi Khan, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 232. Aurangzeb wrote, " I detained you for some reason .... the time has come when I should apologise to you ... it is highly imperative that a sincere well wisher versed in business like yourself should remain in my court". Khafi Khan, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Vol. II, p. 44, quoted in Laiq Ahmad, Prime Ministers of Auranagzeb, p. 58

5 Aurangzeb and Shah Shuja faced each other at village of Kora. Shuja's army rested by the tank of Khajwa or Kachhwa. Khafi Khan, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 233.

6 Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, "Aspects of Military Policy in Medieval India", P.I.H.C. Aligarh, 1975, pp. 250-251. The panic was due to the desertion of Raja Jaswant Singh from Aurangzeb's Camp, Khafi Khan, Muntakbab-ul-Lubab, Vol. II, p. 51, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 233.

showed compete trust in his ability by giving him total discretion in the planning of the battle. Even on the day of the battle Muazzam's elephant was stationed next to Aurangzeb to enable him to advise the emperor. During the course of the battle when Shuja's elephant driver was killed while attacking the centre wing of the imperial army and the emperor was about to dismount, Muazzam shouting 'Qaim Qaim'[1] (steady steady), saved the situation at a critical time. Muazzam Khan who had been for all practical purposes Aurangzeb's advisor was awarded a mansab of haft hazari 7000 Zat 7000 sawar and a reward of one lakh rupees in cash.[2]

The services of Muazzam Khan were again called upon when he was asked to pursue Shuja who had fled towards the East.[3] Accompanied by prince Muhammad Sultan he performed valiant deeds such as were befitting of high officers.[4] When Shuja after fortifying Monghyr entrenched himself there, Muazzam by his skillful manoeuvers forced him to leave that place and shift to Akbarnagar (Rajmahal). Further he displayed tact by taking an indirect route through the jungles and hills to block Shuja's escape. When Shuja deceitfully succeeded in winning over Sultan Muhammad over to his side Muazzam

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1 Manucci, Storia do Mogor, p. 314. It appears in Bernier's account Travels in the Mogul Empire as Decankon, which Constable reads as 'Dakhin Kahan' (where is the Deccan)

2 Khafi Khan, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Vol. II, p. 59, "Muazzam was given a distinction over all others, he got an additional mansab 7000/7000 which is 12,000 barawardi, of this 5,000 were Aspa which including barawardi would be, 7,000/5000 +_ 5000 + 2000 = 7000/12000 which seems to be rather improbable for no other historian, either contemporary or later has mentioned this, quoted in Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 120.

3 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part I, p. 194; Jadunath Sarkar, History of Auranagzib, Vol. II, pp. 566-612, describes Muazzam Khan's campaign against Shuja in great detail.

4 Khafi Khan, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 249.

Khan did not lose his calm and showing tremendous presence of mind saved the imperial army from fatal consequences.[1]

The war to exterminate Shuja was a long drawn affair involving several engagements between the two armies but the imperial army under Muazzam Khan was always successful. The great general who ignored all personal comforts to complete the work entrusted to him was also responsible for the return of Prince Muhammad to his father's side.[2] In the final stages of the battle against Shuja, Muazzam Khan encircled him from all sides forcing him to give up possession of Bengal[3] and moving to Tanda enroute to Jahangir Nagar (Dacca). Shuja was forced to go to Arrakan (Rakhang) as he was left without any supporters. Thus Muazzam brought the task of Shuja's pursuit, assigned to him by Aurangzeb, to a successful conclusion. As a reward for his great role in this campaign that lasted sixteen months he was granted the title of Khan-i-Khanan Sipahasalar.[4]

Muazzam Khan was destined to achieve greater military success for his master Aurangzeb and it was only due to his conquest of Kuch Bihar and Assam that the North-Eastern push of the Mughal emperor reached its logical culmination.[5]

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1 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part 1, p. 194; Khafi Khan, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 250.

2 Khafi Khan, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Eng.trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 250, Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, pp. 151-152.; Manucci, Storia do Mogor, Vol. I, p. 320 tells us Muazzam prepared a letter for Sultan Muhammad asking him to continue as he was doing until occasion arose to fulfil his promise to his father. As intended by Muazzam Khan, the letter fell into Shuja's hands who thus lost trust in Muhammad Sultan.

3 Khafi Khan, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 251. Muhammad Salih Kambu, Amal-i-Salih, Vol. III, p. 328, writes "none knows anything about Shuja's fate in Arakan. It is utterly unknown in what country he is and what he is doing or whether he has been sent to the realm of dead. Quoted in Laiq Ahmad, Prime Ministers of Aurangzeb, p. 77.

4 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part I, p. 197; Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 163.

5 Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, The Life of Mir Jumla the General of Aurangzeb, p. 197.

Owing to the illness of emperor Shah Jahan and the consequent struggle for power among his sons, Bengal became a scene of anarchy and confusion. Taking advantage of such a situation the Raja of Kuch Bihar, Pran Narayan[1] stopped payment of tribute and declared himself independent. He also initiated raids in adjoining Mughal territories. Jayadhwaj Singh, Raja of Assam also started making inroads into the Mughal territories of Kamrup and Gauhati. In these dismal conditions, Aurangzeb directed his *Wazir* to restore order in Assam and Kuch Bihar. Muazzam Khan who thought it was imperative to build a strong navy to punish the ruler of Assam set out to strengthen the imperial naval power, (Mughal emperors had shown marked apathy towards building their naval forces) before undertaking the assault with twelve thousand horses, thirty thousand foot soldiers and a strong flotilla of boats.[2] His army which included Europeans as well[3] reached its destination in December 1661 A.D. The Raja Pran Narayan and his *Wazir* Bhavnath fled and Muazzam Khan occupied the capital of Kuch Bihar without any opposition. However, he forbade the soldiers from indulging in loot and plunder[4] and endeared himself to the people.

After his signal success in Kuch Bihar, Muazzam decided to chastise Jaidhwaj, the ruler of Assam. Reaching the bank of Brahmaputra, Muazzam, army had a tough time crossing the impenetrable jungles of Assam, but finally captured the fort of

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1 Muhammad Kazim, Alamgirnama, and Khafi Khan Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, call him Bhim Narayan in the Fatiyah-i-Ibriya vide Blochman, Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal, XLI, Part I (1872), p. 66, it is Pran Narayan. Kuch and Ahom Chronicles also call him Pran Narayan, Jadunath Sarkar, History of Aurangzib, Vol. III, p. 155.

2 Jadunath Sarkar, History of Aurangzib, Vol. III, pp. 158-161.

3 Mir Jumla who knew about the efficiency of European as sailors employed them for training the Indian crew. In 1659 A.D. he appointed Thomas Pratt mansabdar of 300 horse and gave him the title of Admiral of the River. Thomas Pratt, Punjab Historical Society, April 1954, pp. 150-154.

4 Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, Life of Mir Jumla the General of Aurangzeb, p. 229; S.N. Bhattacharya, A History of Mughal North Eastern Frontier Policy, Spectrum Publishers, New Delhi, 1998, p. 306.

Jogighopa and the Panch Ratan.[1] The imperial forces also took possession of the famous temples of Kamakhya and Lona Chamari. .After bringing the area as far as Gauhati under his control, Muazzam Khan, convinced that mere conquest was meaningless, addressed himself to settling the affairs of the country.

The final round in which Muazzam Khan captured the fort of Simlagarh, fifty Kos from Garhgaon, followed by the capture of Samdhara, completed his victory over the whole of Kamrup and established Mughal authority there. Muazzam Khan's skill and courage had led to the conquest of such a vast distant area fortified with numerous forts. The great general was honoured with a special Khilat, the tumantogh and reward of one crore dams.[2]

The appearance of Mir Jumla in the North Eastern frontier resulting in the subjugation of Kuch Bihar and Kamrup was the most daring example of imperialistic venture that was almost unparalleled in the history of Mughal India.[3] Soon after signing the peace treaty, Muazzam Khan died in March, 1663 A.D. (Masnad-Arae-i-Bahisht)[4] leaving Aurangzeb to grieve at the death of a loyal, willing and efficient servant who earned great military successes for his master.[5]

Spending a major part of his career as a general in camps in the eastern region, Mir Jumla combined intrepidity with wisdom, energy with caution and resolution with ability. His services as *Wazir* were utilised to the utmost by both Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb. Although he

1 William Irvine, Army of the Indian Mughals, p. 174.

2 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part I, p. 200; Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 207.

3 However both Kuch Bihar and Kamrup slipped away from the Mughals after Mir Jumla's death, S.N. Bhattacharya, A History of Mughal North Eastern Frontier Policy, p. 387.

4 Khafi Khan, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab. Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 269; Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 207.

5 Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 208; Khafi Khan, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 269.

did not get an opportunity to display his talent on the administrative side, yet his achievements were of no mean order. It was he who diverted Shah Jahan's attention from a hopeless expedition of Qandhar to the successful conquest of Bijapur. Further as the advisor of Aurangzeb during the war of succession, Muazzam Khan secured the throne for him against his brother Shah Shuja. It was due to his efforts that the difficult conquest of Kuch Bihar and Assam that carried Mughal conquest in the North-East to a logical and successful conclusion was achieved.[1]

Mir Jumla's achievements in territorial expansion are set forth in an ode written by Mulla Darvesh of Herat in praise of the conquest of Assam :

The rank-shattering warrior, the captor of forts
and conqueror of realms (i.e. Mir Jumla)
Revived anew the forgotten tale of
The 'Seven Stages' which had been sung
by the Philosopher (Firdausi) in the Shah Nama.
And which had been gone through by Isfandiyar and Rustom.
The face of Fortune, the heart of Valour and the arm of victory.
Conqueror of realms, bestoever of Kingdoms and Ornaments of the world;
The Khan-i-Khana, Commander in Chief,
leader of armies, whom, by way of honour,
The Emperor gave the title of 'Faithful Friend',

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1 Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, Life of Mir Jumla - The General of Aurangzeb, p. 349.

That peer of royal dignity, that Sayyid possessed of the characteristics of his ancestors,

The back of Persia, the cheek of India,

The head of the Kingdom of God, ---

He is Mustafa charged with divine

instruction and guidance after that (chosen one, Muhammad)

He is Murtaza (in) the keenness of his Sword and spear in the day of battle.[1]

The role of Jafar Khan and Asad Khan in expansion and consolidation of the empire was inconsequential as there was no expansion worth the name. Despite Aurangzeb's success in the conquest of Bijapur and Golkunda in 1686-1687 A.D. his Deccan experience proved the military inadequacy of Aurangzeb, as despite his best efforts the Marathas managed to undermine imperial campaigns.[2]

The prolonged inconclusiveness of the Deccan wars complicated matters beyond repair. His absence from North India weakened imperial institutions there and led to agrarian revolts[3] that put a tremendous strain on the financial resources and undermined the achievements of the previous years.

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1 Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, Life of Mir Jumla - The General of Aurangzeb, p. 358.

2 Burton Stein, History of India, O.U.P., New Delhi, 1998, p. 184.

3 Manucci, Storia Do Mogor, Vol. II, p. 320; R.P. Rana, "Agrarian Revolts in Northern India during the late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Century", Indian Economic and Social History Review", 1981, p. 289.

CHAPTER - IV

MUGHAL PRIME MINISTERS AND ECONOMY

The rapid imperial expansion that took place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was accompanied by a fair measure of political unity, centralized administration and a uniform revenue policy that was bound to usher in an era of economic prosperity. At the same time significant economic development, characteristic of the sixteenth century, was also to some extent the result of expansion of commercial contact with European nations.[1]

At the height of its expansionist stage the Mughal empire witnessed steady increase in revenue that came from a systematic policy of taxation and tribute. The economic activities of the Mughals that resulted in the creation of a wealthy state began with Akbar whose desire for glory and the spirit for enterprise led him to initiate a process of rebuilding the economy. In the achievement of sound traditions of financial administration, where sources of income and expenditure were well defined, the Mughal emperors were supported by very able administrators.

Akbar was lucky to have enjoyed the services of some financial geniuses who rose to be his prime ministers in helping him to initiate a process of economic reorganization on broader lines. These reforms, developed under Akbar, embodied the indigenous and the Sur economic ideas as well as the traditional Timurid ones.

Mughal prime ministers played a significant role in building the economy in three different ways. Firstly, by improving land revenue

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1 Tapan Ray Chaudhuri and Irfan Habib, ed., The Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol. I, Orient Longman and Cambridge University Press, 1982, p. xiii.

system and formulating general financial policies in which the contribution of prime ministers like Muzaffar Khan, Todar Mal, and Sadullah Khan was tremendous. Secondly, the role of some prime-ministers in encouragement and indulgence in trade and commerce is well established. The economy of the Mughal empire and its trade with Europe clearly marks out the age as a distinct phase in the country's economic history[1]. Though the Mughal empire was not a firmly unified modern nation state but the process of imperial unification did strengthen its economic ties with distant areas and boosted its commercial relations. While some *Wazirs* like Asaf Khan and Mir Jumla had vast commercial interests[2] others made a significant contribution as promoters of *'Karkhanas'* and *'Bazaars'* through personal supervision and input of capital required for such enterprises.[3] Finally, some Mughal prime ministers like Munim Khan and Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan, took a keen interest in fostering the process of urbanization which directly or indirectly boosted economic activity.

A. CONTRIBUTION IN FINANCIAL POLICIES

Although the specific contribution of Prime-Ministers in revitalising the economic structure becomes conspicuous only under Akbar's rule, who was instrumental in shaping all institutions that can be termed 'Mughal', their interest in financial activities can be traced to his ancestors.

Under the great warrior Changiz Khan, the Prime Minister exercised enormous influence on all important issues and great attention was paid to every suggestion made by his advisors. Though a

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1 Tapan Ray Chaudhuri and Irfan Habib ed., The Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol. I, p. XIV.

2 Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, Studies in Economic Life in Mughal India, Oriental Publishers, New Delhi, 1975, p. 184; U.N. Day, The Mughal Government, p. 201.

3 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 848; Athar Ali, The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb, p. 92.

savage warrior, Changiz Khan appears to be a military and political genius of the time because he was able to organise the barbarous tribal communities and set up laws and institutions which lasted for generations after his death.[1] Even under his son Ogotoi, the premier noble's influence was predominant in all affairs[2] including his suggestions on the economic issues.

Even Timur, whose legacy to Babur by way of political institutions is as conspicuous as that of Changiz Khan, lauded his *Wazirs* over their dexterity in economic affairs. He remarked "They kept rich my treasury and they secured plenty and prosperity to my subjects .... they kept in order the expenses of the government".[3] Timur endeavoured to maintain a sound system of administration for he wanted not only to conquer but also to govern, and therefore, good administration was as much a part of his ambitious scheme as the desire for conquest.[4]

The revenue administration of the kingdom was under a hierarchy of officials such as Muhassils, Ummals and Amins who were controlled by the Diwan-i-Ala from the centre. The revenue records could be requisitioned by the Diwan-i-Ala, the most important official, for scrutiny and realisation of arrears. However, it is not clear whether the Diwan-i-Ala was the name of the office or the officer incharge or of both. Most references indicate that the senior most officer was designated 'Sahib-i-Diwan' or 'Ahl-i-Diwan' and that he headed the

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1 Kiran Pawar, "Central Asiatic Background of Akbar", P.I.H.C., Dharwad, 1980,. p. 189.

2 Ralph Fox, Genghis Khan, p. 245.

3 Sharfuddin Ali Yazdi, Zafarnama, Eng. trans. Major Davy as Political and Military Institutes of Timur, pp. 76,102.

4 Mansura Haider, "Timur's Methods of Administration", P.I.H.C. 1977, p. 201; Beatrice Forbes Manz, The Rise and Rule of Tamurlane, Cambridge 1989, p. 107, argues that Timur spent almost all his long career on campaigns and did not attempt to construct a comprehensive new governmental structure.

Diwan-I-Ala.[1]

With the arrival of Mughals in India we see the prime minister taking a more keen interest in finance. Although we do not have the details regarding the extent of Baqi Chagniani's (Babur's Prime Minister in the unsettled phase of his career) contribution, but his jurisdiction must have extended to financial aspect of the administration as well. As Babur's chief advisor regarding whom Babur writes, "no man of mine had more trust and authority"[2], he must have influenced him in whatever financial decisions he made.

Babur's most famous *Wazir* Nizamuddin Khalifa was the political and financial head of the government.[3] No man enjoyed higher estimation in the eyes of Babur and everything was done in compliance with his advice. Although Babur does not refer to Nizamuddin Khalifa as *Vakil*, he enjoyed the complete trust of his master[4] and exercised general supervision over civil and military departments including finance which entitled him to administer a check on the work of the provincial diwan.

In Babur's time the *Vakil* was the general minister and Nizamuddin Khalifa seems to have discharged the functions of *Vakil/ Wazir*, and served as a link between the sovereign and heads of various departments, enjoying the same position as some of the *Wazirs* of the Turkish period.[5] The very fact that he deputised the government during Babur's illness is indicative of his expertise and involvement in all aspects of administration including that of finance. Khalifa often

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1 Sharfuddin Yazdi, Zafarnama, Eng. trans., Major Davy, as Political and Military Institutes of Timur, p. 213.; Syed Jamaluddin, The State under Timur, Haranand Pub., New Delhi, 1995, p. 89.
2 Babur, Baburnama, Vol. I, Eng.trans. p.249.
3 Radhey Shyam, Babur, Janaki Prakashan, Allahabad, 1978, p. 408.
4 Babur, Baburnama, Eng. trans. Vol. I and II, p. 249.
5 Ibid., p. 278.

being referred to as 'Babur's Government'[1] also suggests his position.

During the Mughal period one sees a direct relationship between functions of the *Vakil* and *Wazir*. When there was a *Vakil* the *Wazir* was revenue and finance minister and was sometimes described as *Diwan*.[2] When there was no *Vakil*, the *Wazir* was in charge of general as well as revenue administration.[3]

Humayun continued the policy of Babur and left the *Wazir* in full possession of his powers. He divided the affairs of the government into four departments and entrusted them to the care of his *Wazir*, Amir Wais Muhammad[4] who exercised full control over all departments of the government. Under Babur and during the first phase of Humayun's rule in India the *Wazir* enjoyed wide powers and was considered the most important official in the state. But his authority was divided when during Qaracha Beg's tenure his powers were restricted to administrative matters only and he was deprived of control of the financial affairs.[5] Indirectly this step imparted some shape to the institution of w*izarat* and the position of the incumbent in later years. It was only during Akbar's reign that as a counterbalance to the power of *Wazir/Vakil* that reached its climax during the regency of Bairam Khan that the office of Chief Diwan had come to really stay in the

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1 Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 463.

2 W.H.Moreland, TheAgrarian System of Moslem India,, Oriental Books, New Delhi, p. 278.

3 Ibid, p. 279; Ibn Hasan, Central Structure of Mughal Empire, says, "when the *Vakil* ceases to be a permanent or indispensable member of the administration the diwan or diwan-i-kul becomes responsible for revenue and finance and corresponds exactly with the Diwan-i-Wizarat of the Sultanat and Diwan-i-Amal of Ibn Khaldun", pp. 145-146.

4 Khwandamir, Humayunnama, Elliot & Dowson, Vol. V, p.124. Humayunnama or Qanun-i-Humayani, was written by Khwandamir at Humayun's desire. Though it covers only three years of Humayun's reign it furnishes important information regarding political institutions, rules and ordinances and buildings erected by Humayun. Sayyid Nurul Hasan, "New Light on the Relations of the Early Mughal rulers with their nobilitym", P.I.H.C., 1944, p. 392.

5 Iqtidar Alam Khan, "Wizarat under Humayun" 1545-1555, P.I.H.C., 1960, p. 248.

framework of Mughal administrative setup.[1]

When Bairam Khan became the Prime Minister (*Vakil-us-Sultanat*) of the kingdom, Akbar handed over all affairs of the state and finances to him.[2] Bairam Khan's interest in reviving the economy is ascertained by his attempt to adopt for general use a schedule of assessment rate as the basis of claiming for the state, one-third of the average produce stated in grain with rates fixed in cash for a few crops only.[3] Badaoni states that sometimes even Akbar had no say in some of the transactions relating to the expenses of the exchequer which was completely controlled by Bairam Khan.[4] It is also alleged that the young emperor could incur personal expenditure only with his approval.

Bairam Khan's contribution in the establishment of imperial coinage on behalf of Akbar was also substantial. In 1556 A.D. itself, he struck a new Mughal coin in silver and copper, favoured by the Sur dynasty. Bairam Khan preferred to adopt the monetary policies of the Surs over the traditional Timurid style of coinage. By 1560 A.D. the new regime under Bairam Khan's watchful supervision possessed a fully functional trimetallic currency comprising of gold, silver and copper.[5]

It was Akbar's ill experience of the power enjoyed by Bairam Khan that made him realise the necessity of clipping the financial powers of his Prime Minister. The office of the *Vakil-us-Sultanat* in the process lost its glamour and even fell into disuse at times. In his place the *Wazir*

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1 Humayun is said to have appointed Khwaja Ghazi to the post of Mushrif-i-Diwan to curtail the authority of the Wazir. Iqtidar Alam Khan, "Wizarat under Humayun," P.I.H.C., 1960, p. 248.
2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 182.
3 W.H.Moreland, The Agrarian System of Moslem India, pp. 82-83.
4 Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, Eng.trans. W.H. Lowe, p. 30, says since there was no privy purse at all, the servants of the Empire had poor fiefs. pp. 26 , 29. Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, pp. 63-64, 70-71; Afzal Hussain, The Nobility under Akbar and Jahangir – A study of Family Groups, p. 16.
5 J.F.Richards, The Mughal Empire, p. 71.

popularly styled as Chief Diwan became the head of financial administration.[1]

Akbar was lucky as two of his senior nobles, Muzaffar Khan and Raja Todar Mal who rose to the position of prime ministers, were financial geniuses who introduced extensive reforms that totally revamped Mughal agrarian and revenue system that not only resulted in noticeable economic prosperity but also survived with little changes until the early years of the eighteenth century. The economy of the sub-continent responded very positively to the innovative experiments launched by them. Abul Fazl aptly remarks, "the revenues which were the foundation of sovereignty and the basis of dominion and the source of military strength were put upon a sound footing".[2]

During Akbar's tenure Muzaffar Khan, an able financier, appointed with the intention of decentralising the powers of the *Vakil*, carried out several important financial reforms that led to the consolidation of his own position and that of the ministry.[3] Making use of his practical knowledge of revenue administration, the first reform introduced by Muzaffar Khan was abolishing the '*Jama-i-Raqami*.[4] This was the name of the assessment of Delhi empire which had been existing since the time of Bairam Khan. This assessment was based on the schedule of crop yields and prices thereof (crop rates) as inherited from Sher Shah and commuted into cash rates on the basis of current

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1 I.H. Qureshi, The Administration of the Mughal Empire, p. 10, This happened with the elevation of Muzaffar Khan Turbati to the office of Diwan in 1563-64 A.D.. Henceforth, the Vikalat was shorn of all its former powers and prestige.

2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p, 277.

3 Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 373.

4 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part I, pp. 221-222. The name as given to the settlement in the text is Jama-i-Raqami-i-Qalmi that is perhaps "the assessment which was expressed in raqami or sujag character i.e. in contractions of Arabic words instead of Hindi figures"; But most probably the word raqami refers to assessment being made according to the kind of produce, qalmi means that the assessment was a paper one and not based on actuals, Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 401.

prices.[1] This had become obsolete and was often subject to abuse. The rent roll showed an assessment very different from the actual state of things for an account of the number of men (*Kasrat-i-Mardum)* i.e. jagir holders and the unsettled state (q*alb-i-wilayat*) of the country, the revenue was increased in name (*banam afzudah*) for the sake of mere show (*barai, mazid-i-ubar*).[2]

This method of levying the state's demand (*jama*) became a source of corruption and was decreased at will and bribes were also being taken for the purpose. Muzaffar Khan prepared a fresh rent roll according to his experience and the returns submitted by the qanungoes. This came to be known as j*ama hal-i-hasil* or the assessment of the actual produce of the lands. Ten qanungoes as well as other experts made the assessment on the basis of the actual produce of the land. Abul Fazl remarks, "although this assessment was not really a *hal-hasil* assessment yet in comparison with the earlier assessment it was undoubtedly more rational and closer to *hasil"*.[3]

Muzaffar Khan was also responsible for the promulgation of a regulation, which fixed the number of troops each mansabdar should support and how much these troops should be paid. He divided the soldiers into three classes.[4] He allowed the first class, forty eight thousand dams, the second, thirty two thousand dams and the third, twenty four thousand dams per annum.

In 1577 A.D., with Muzaffar Khan at the helm of affairs. Akbar undertook a reform of currency and placed all mints at the provincial

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1 Kumud Ranjan Das, Raja Todar Mal, p. 143.

2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 402; Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 373; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part 1, p. 360.

3 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, pp. 402, 403; Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 373, Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, pt. 1, p. 360.

4 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol.II, p. 403; Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, pp. 373-374; Maasir-ul Umara, Vol. II, pt I, p. 360.

headquarters under the charge of responsible officers who worked under Khwaja Abdus Samad.[1] (These had hitherto been under the charge of chaudharies.)

When Akbar directed Muzaffar Khan along with Shah Mansur to inspect the capital treasury and compare cash with the account books, he performed his duty diligently and reported that he found everything in order.[2] As he excelled in astuteness, knowledge of economy and strict observance of rules and regulations he issued full demands for the realisation of arrears and resumptions. Abul Fazl's specific description of Muzaffar Khan's accomplishments as *Wazir* places him on a high pedestal. "He managed in a proper manner the operation of treasury which is the capital stock of sovereignty, the improvement of peasantry and control of the army".[3]

The contribution of Raja Todar Mal in restoring strength and vitality to the economy cannot be overestimated. Todar Mal's gradual rise[4] from the position of a petty clerk (*munshi*) in the central secretariat to the lofty position of *Ashraf-i-Diwan* offers a striking example of upward mobility in one's profession in an infrastructure created by Akbar that gave ample opportunity to deserving individuals irrespective of religious and social background.

His inherent ability as a discerning financier did not escape the attention of Akbar who rewarded him accordingly. In 1573 A.D., Todar

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1. Khwaja Abdus Samad was made superintendent of the imperial mint at Delhi. John S. Deyell, "The Development of Akbar's Currency System and Monetary Integration of Conquered Kingdoms" in J.F. Richards ed. The Imperial Monetary System of Mughal India, p. 19.
2. Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, pp. 373-374.
3. Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Part-I, pp. 198-199, 279-280; Akbarnama, Vol.II, pp. 197-198.
4. He was brought up in great difficulty after his father's death but since boyhood showed signs of wisdom and dynamism. He was enrolled as a scribe (jarga of nawis andigan) in the central government. He was promoted to the post of secretary in the central revenue department under Muzaffar Khan, Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. I, p. 376-379; Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 65; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II, p. 951.

Mal was deputed to work out the revenue settlement of Gujrat. In 1575 A.D. he was made *Ashraf-i-Diwan* of the central finance ministry.[1] He suggested to Akbar, the advantages of introducing the branding regulations of horses in the royal army, fixation of the grades of mansabdars and conversion of jagir lands into khalisa lands which were to be under the administration of officers of the state and not those of the assignees. Such was Akbar's confidence in his financial abilities that when he undertook a change of policy with regard to the mints of the empire, he handed over the one at Bengal[2] to the charge of Todar Mal. Previously the various mints were under the charge of minor officials called chaudharies who did not possess sufficient rank and personal weight to secure satisfactory obedience of their orders and administration. Todar Mal enjoys a prominent position in the annals concerned with revenue affairs of Akbar's time[3]. Historians like Khafi Khan, Shah Nawaz Khan and Ghulam Hussain Tabatabai unanimously acclaim his achievements both in administrative and revenue affairs.[4]

Todar Mal was the brain behind the whole scheme of reforms collectively called the Ain-i-Dahsala, "The essence of this innovation was that having ascertained the ten year's state (*hal-i-dahsala*) of every pargana in regard to the categories of cultivation and the levels of

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1 Todar Mal became the Ashraf-i-Diwan, virtually having the powers of the *Vakil* in 1581-82 A.D. and was raised to the rank of 4,000 in 1585 A.D., Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 560.

2 Abul Fazl does not mention at any place as to where in Bengal the mint was. The word Bengal (Bengala) is used as if it was the name of a city, Akbarnama, Vol. III, pp. 320-321.

3 An original text of Todar Mal's memorandum on revenue administration that survives in one of the manuscripts of the Akbarnama, provides a very profound understanding of the actual working of Mughal land revenue system. Irfan Habib explains very extensively the intricacies of the Mughal land revenue system, Agrarian System of Mughal India, O.U.P., 1999, New Delhi, pp. 236-271.

4 Names of other able financiers of Akbar's time like Muzaffar Khan, Shah Mansur and Fatullah Shirazi who played equally important roles in creating the financial edifice of the Mughal empire find negligible references by these writers. Z.U.Malik, "The Eigtheenth Century View of Akbar, The Legend of Todar Mal", in Iqtidar Alam Khan, ed. Akbar and His Age, p. 244.

prices, they fixed the tenth part thereof as the annual revenue (*mal-i-harsala*)".[1]

Khafi Khan states that the efficient system of financial administration implemented by Todar Mal so systematically became a model (*zarb al misal*) for the people of Hindustan.[2] The rules framed by him became guidelines for successful functioning of the system to be followed by the diwans and amins (revenue officers) engaged in collection of revenue in the parganas.

Before Todar Mal's reforms the people depended on black copper coins (*pul-i-siyab)* called tankah for their sales and purchases as well as payments to employees. Assessment and collection of revenue in mahals was also made in the same currency. The silver tankah was used only for rewards to foreign dignitaries and local musicians (*mutriban*) and also sold as bullion in the market. Todar Mal removed this confusion prevalent in the currency system[3] by suggesting an exchange of old coins with new ones.[4]

According to the reforms introduced by Todar Mal all servants of

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1 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, Eng. trans. pp. 282-283.

2 Murshid Quli Khan extended Todar Mal's revenue reforms to the Deccan, Azmat Ali Beg, "Murshid Quli Khan Khurasani with special reference to his Deccan deeds". Q.R.H.S, Vol. XIII, pp. 212-216; Syed Anees Jahan, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 58; M.A.Nayeem, "Some Aspects of Land Revenue System in the Deccan during the Eighteenth Century" in M.A. Nayeem, Aniruddha Ray, K.S. Mathew, ed., Studies in the History of the Deccan : Medieval and Modern, 2002, p. 189.

3 Khafi Khan, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Vol. I, p.155, Z.U. Malik, "The Eighteenth Century view of Akbar", in Iqtidar Alam Khan ed. Akbar and His Age, p. 245; Shah Nawaz Khan says as earlier the salaries of the soldiery were reckoned in black copper coins, Todar Mal fixed the value of the rupee which was earlier computed at 40 fulus at forty dams, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II, p. 956.

4 Article X of the Todar Mal's memorandum states, "that the asharfi, rupaiya muradi (copper money) whatever is coined should be issued by the officials of the mint to the custodians of the treasury... so that the karori, treasurer fotadar and sarraf change new with old coins at the decreased rates". Shireen Moosvi, "Todar Mal's original memorandum on the Revenue Administration , March, 1582," P.I.H.C., 1988, p.237.

the empire were to receive salaries in silver rupee (*sikka rupiya*) weighing eleven '*mashas*' in place of '*tankah*', and revenue collection was to be made in the same currency. The value of one rupee was fixed at forty dams corresponding to the current rate of copper, one *dam resembling* the small black fulus (or *paisa*).[1] Similarly revenue called naqd jambandi *or* revenue demand assessed in cash[2] was also calculated in the same way.

Todar Mal was also very closely associated with Akbar's attempt at systemising and centralising the revenue administration and despite intermittent breaks when he was sent on military expeditions he worked hard towards achieving this.[3] In his attempt to improve revenue machinery he submitted twelve recommendations to the emperor for his approval in March 1582 A.D.[4] His memorandum helps us in understanding agrarian conditions as perceived by the Mughal administrators.

Todar Mal worked out new methods for the assessment of revenue demand. The state share on grain crops raised on rainfall (baran) would be half while that of crops irrigated from wells was to be one-third and in cases of crops like vegetables, fruits, sugarcane, opium etc., which involved expenditure on irrigation, it ranged from one-fourth

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1 Khafi Khan, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Vol. I, p. 155; Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 32; Irfan Habib, The Agrarian System of Mughal India, discusses the Mughal coinage system in great detail. Whereas Khafi Khan holds Todar Mal responsible for achieving this, Moreland says that the silver rupee of eleven mashas was introduced in the time of Sher Shah. However Khafi Khan does not say that Todar Mal was the first to introduce it.

2 Moreland argues that rent rates were not fixed in cash but were stated in grain and commuted on annual prices, The Agrarian System of Moslem India, p. 256. According to Irfan Habib, the Ain-i-Akbari gives no information on this account. Sadiq Khan, author of Shah Jahannama, says that in the Deccan, villagers and peasants paid to the authorities a little money on each plough, varying with the territory and the pargana. The Agrarian System of Mughal India, p. 226.

3 Shireen Moosvi, "Todar Mal's Original Memorandum on the Revenue Administration, March 1582", P.I.H.C., 1988, p. 237.

4 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 381; Irfan Habib, Agrarian System of Mughal India, p. 317.

to one-fifth, one-sixth to one-seventh of the yield.[1] This system of fixing cash rates where assessed revenue could be realized in cash came to be popularly known as *Dastur-ul-Amal* and *Dhara*[2] and continued to be in force upto the middle of the eighteenth century.

The virtual position of *Vakil* conferred on Todar Mal brought about other important financial and administrative reforms as the Mughal administration perceived muqaddams, chaudharis and qanungoes as the oppressors of the peasantry.[3] Todar Mal laid down that if collectors and jagirdars extorted more than the stipulated rents and taxes, the excess was to be shown as the legitimate tax realised from the cultivators. The collectors who were guilty of extortion were to be fined and the amount of fine was to be entered in the monthly accounts. Another reform provided that a collector in the crown lands was to have only one competent head clerk as against two earlier. He also issued an order that a sufficient number of surveyors were to visit every pargana to measure the standing crops and to record their kind and quality. He also saw to it that pargana officers sent a list of the damaged crops every season. The governors of provinces were asked to crush recalcitrant zamindars and cultivators in an attempt to create harmonious conditions where cultivators paid their dues without any compulsion. All officers involved in revenue collection were to submit their reports very regularly to the court. As Prime Minister, Todar Mal also fixed the remuneration of the officers employed in survey and

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1 Z.U. Malik, "The Eighteenth Century view of Akbar, The Legend of Todar Mal" in Akbar and his Age, ed. Iqtidar Alam Khan, p. 246.

2 The schedule of revenue rates on a single set of commutation rates was adopted in the twenty fourth year showing the demand per bigha in dam, on each crop in each year. Shireen Moosvi, The Economy of the Mughal Empire, New Delhi, 1987, p. 97.

3 Shireen Moosvi, "Todar Mal's Original Memorandum on the Revenue administration, March 1582", P.I.H.C., 1988, p. 240.

collection work.[1] All amils of the Khalisa and jagirdars were ordered to collect revenue according to regulations/scheduled cash rates (*Dastur-ul-Amal*) and not harass the peasantry by claiming more. If any revenue collector was found to be indulging in misappropriation then that amount was to be deducted from his monthly salary and remitted to the peasantry from the revenue due upon each harvest and the official be punished accordingly.[2] The thoroughness with which Todar Mal worked out the details reveals his financial acumen.

Akbar displayed implicit faith in Todar Mal's revenue reforms as is indicated in his issuing an imperial order.

> *"To assign the work to the competent is the work of the most efficient one (Todar Mal) – Him we have deemed to be the select for truth, correct conduct and knowledge of affairs of the diwani and have assigned to him the duty of obtaining information .... whoever for the sake of crass greed and blind inclination (to evil) acts contrary to orders and oppresses the peasants, let him so punish him that it be a lesson to all men of limited intellects".*[3]

Todar Mal's name is closely linked with the organization of land revenue administration in Bengal, after the province was brought under the Mughal empire during Todar Mal's tenure as *Ashraf-i-Diwan.* The territorial division of *subahs* into sarkars and parganas and of the Khalisa and jagir lands, preparation of rent roll called *'asl tuman jam'* and the constitution of fiscal regulations that were more detailed and uniform were all contributions of Todar Mal. The following extract

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1 The surveyors were to be paid at the rate of one dam per bigha of the cultivated land and those who worked the whole day were to be paid twenty four dams. Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 563.

2 Shireen Moosvi, 'Todar Mal's Original Memorandum on the Revenue Administration , March 1582". P.I.H.C. 1988, p. 241.

3 Ibid. p. 242.

illustrates this.[1]

> *"The statement (haqiqat) of suba Bengal is this. After the annexation of Bengal to the empire, Raja Todar Mal assessed the produce (baramad) by the mode of summary estimate (hast o bud) and fixed the revenue of the village (mauza) and mahal. This procedure is called jam tumani (rent roll)."*

The most important reform introduced by Todar Mal was changing the language and character used in maintenance of revenue records. Earlier they were maintained by Hindu Maharrirs in Hindi. By ordering all government accounts to be kept in Persian, he coerced his co-religionists to learn the language.[2] This order enabled the Hindus, who had hitherto remained politically below their muslim counterparts, to rise in official hierarchy. The efficiency with which Todar Mal was managing the finances of the empire can be estimated from the fact that after his death when Qulij Khan was appointed *Wazir* he found the work of the revenue department so heavy that the crown lands were divided into four divisions.[3]

The system of revenue assessment and land survey evolved by Todar Mal always drew a balance between the demands of the state and the requirements of the peasants which immortalised his name. Though the Mughal dynasty died out, the system introduced by him continued to be in use and was followed by the Marathas and to great extent by the British as well.

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[1] Persian Revenue Records of Bengal, Br. Museum m.s. quoted in Z.U.Malik, "The Eighteenth Century view of Akbar"; "The Legend of Todar Mal", in Iqtidar Alam Khan ed. Akbar and his Age, p. 248.

[2] Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 351.

[3] 1. Punjab, Multan, Kabul, Kashmir were entrusted to Khwaja Shamsuddin 2. Ajmer, Gujrat and Malwa to Nizamuddin Ahmad, 3. Delhi to Patr Das. 4. Agra Allahabad, Bihar and Bengal to Rai Ram Das

As far as the role of the prime ministers in the agrarian system under Jahangir and Shah Jahan are concerned the information found in contemporary sources including official documents is scanty and incomplete. They record no important changes in the first half of the seventeenth century and leave one to assume that Akbar's methods of assessment remained in operation in their totality.[1]

The absence of any reference to financial contribution of prime ministers in the post Akbar period could be associated to some extent to the absence of a chronicler of the stature of Abul Fazl. Moreover, the work of evolution had ended and the work of the revenue department had been more or less formulated. The success of financial strategies undertaken by Itmad-ud-Daulah and successive prime ministers lay in strictly following rules laid down by Akbar and initiating laws which would make them permanent. Moreover, though the *Wazir* appears to have enjoyed the full confidence of the emperor and real power in his own department there are only a few cases in which his influence was felt outside his department.[2]

> *Although Alexander Dow observes that under Itmad-ud Daulah "agriculture which had been neglected was encouraged, many provinces desolated by former disturbances and wars were by degrees repeopled and cultivated. Security of prosperity was given to the farmer,*

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[1] W.H. Moreland, The Agrarian System of Moslem India, p. 124. However this view is refuted by other scholars. Murshid Quli Khan who was appointed diwan of Deccan during the reign of Shah Jahan and vice royalty of Aurangzeb contributed significantly to the revenue administration by introducing novel methods of assessment. Shireen Moosvi, Economy of the Mughal Empire, p. 194; Jadunath Sarkar History of Auarangzib, Vol. I, pp. 189-193; Abdul Karim, "Murshid Quli Khan and his Times", Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca, 1963, p. 20; Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, Studies in Economic Life of Mughal India, p. 221; M.A.Nayeem, " Some Aspects of Land Revenue System in the Deccan During the Eighteenth Century" in M.A. Nayeem, Aniruddha Ray, K.S. Mathew ed. Studies in History of the Deccan, Medieval and Modern. p. 189.

[2] Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. II, p. 153.

the industry of the mechanic was protected ... the revenues of the empire gradually increased ... ".[1]

This appears to be an exaggerated account as it seems improbable that agriculture was neglected by Akbar or even in the early part Jahangir's reign. Moreover contemporary chronicles and foreign travellers do not draw a very encouraging picture of agricultural conditions in the latter half of Jahangir's reign.[2] If the existing state of affairs was so pathetic Itmad-ud-Daulah by no means seems to have encouraged agriculture.[3] Considered very skilful in transacting state business he was equally famous for his greed. According to Muhamad Hadi, the author of Tatimma-i-Waqiat-i-Jahangiri :

"the charitability toward which the minister was so well disposed and which allowed no one (to) ever ... leave his door dissatisfied, was also the liberality which drew him toward off beat financial arrangements for in the taking of bribes he certainly was uncompromising and fearless".[4]

Itmad-ud-Daulah's disposition towards financial flattery is not mentioned by all contemporary sources, but later observers including the Dutch were aware of his weakness in this regard[5] but they have still given a commendatory appraisal of Jahangir's Prime Minister.

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1 Alexander Dow, History of Hindostan from the Death of Akbar to the Settlement of the Empire under Aurangzeb, Vol. I, pp. 37-38.

2 Palsaert, Jahangir's India, writes, 'so much is wrung from the peasants that even dry bread is scarcely left to them for their food." p. 46.

3 Ashok Kumar Sarkar, 'Itmad-ud-Daulah — A Sketch of his Life and Career', Q.R.H.S, 1970-71, p. 161.

4 Muhammad Hadi, Tatimma-i-Waqiat-i-Jahangiri, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 397; Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-I-Jahangiri, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson,Vol. VI, p. 404.

5 Pieter Van Den Broecke, A Contemporary Dutch Chronicle of Mughal India, Eng. trans. Brij Narain and Sri Ram Sharma, Sushil Gupta, Calcutta, 1957, describes Itmad-ud-Daulah's misappropriation of fifty thousands rupees and the trouble it caused to the family , pp. 39-40; De Laet's Description of India and Fragment of Indian History, confirms the embezzling charge, Eng.trans. J.S. Hoyland and S.N. Bannerjee annotated The Empire of the Great Mogul, Idarah-i-adabiyat-i-Delli, 1975, pp. 178-179.

Alexander Dow remarks "an economist in everything but in charity he was only covetous of wealth to relieve the needy and the poor".[1] However Itmad-ud-Daulah remained unmatched in the confidence that he enjoyed as Jahangir's Prime Minister. His advice was greatly valued by Jahangir who records a deep sense of grief in his memoirs at the death of Itmad-ud-Daulah in 1622 A.D.[2]

The Diwan happened to be the most important official in Shah Jahan's regime and as virtual head of administration enjoyed great importance in financial and general matters. We do not get much information about the financial activities of Afzal Khan and Islam Khan, the first two diwans under Shah Jahan, but Sadullah Khan was a capable and efficient financier.[3] He introduced certain regulations for the administration of revenue and finance based upon the "considerations of the prosperity of the raiyyat and calculated to increase the prayers for King's prosperity and give himself a good name........."[4]

Sadullah Khan also known for his knowledge of business was brought into politics by the emperor himself. The fact that he continued in office from 1645 till his death in 1656[5] A.D. which remains unsurpassed during Shah Jahan's rule is a proof of the position he enjoyed as *Diwan*.[6] It is recorded that in drafting notes on accounts

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1 Alexander Dow, The History of Hindostan from the Death of Akbar to the Settlement of the Empire under Aurangzeb, Vol. III, p. 55.

2 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. II, p. 222; Waqiat-i-Jahangiri, Eng.trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI p. 382.

3 Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badshahnama, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 71; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 637.

4 Chandar Bhan Brahman, Chahar Chaman, pp. 94-95, quoted in Ibn Hasan, Central Structure of the Mughal Empire, p. 191.

5 Inayat Khan, Shah Jahannama, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 118; Muhammand Salih Kambu, Amal-i-Salih, p. 216, quoted in Firdoz Anwar, Nobility under the Mughals, 1628-1568, p. 118.

6 Sadullah Khan and Afzal Khan are examples of competent diwans who retained the emperor's confidence and continued in office till their death. Firdoz Anwar, Nobility under the Mughals, 1628-1658, p. 118.

and revenue matters Sadullah Khan needed no help from his secretaries.

Sadullah Khan is said to have established a new territorial unit called 'Chakla'[1], which included a number of parganas. However, the *Chakla* as a territorial division did not replace the *Sarkar* which continued as before. The reason that prompted Sadullah Khan to create a new unit was the fact that he felt that there was not enough work in the pargana to keep both the Amil and Amin busy[2]. He withdrew the amin from each pargana and posted him in the *Chakla* which consisted of a number of *parganas*. Later another officer (faujdar) was stationed at the Chakla headquarters for punishment of rebels and keeping roads safe for travellers. The *Amil* of the *pargana* was made subordinate to the faujdar and the *Amin* of the *Chakla*. The *Chaklas* proved to be a useful experiment as the *Chakladars* who cultivated their land carefully, helped in increasing the revenue[3].

An important feature that raises a question regarding Sadullah Khan's contribution is found in the English Factory records which say

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1 Rai Bhara Mal, Lubb-ut-Tawarikh-i-Hind, Eng.trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 171. The Chakla was a portion (qat'a) of a Sarkar over which a faujdar was sometimes appointed. But the term does not occur in the documents of the time of Akbar and Jahangir. The statement that Sadullah Khan was responsible for re-establishing the Chaklas is due to fact that this territorial division began to be mentioned in the records of Shah Jahan's reign. The Chaklas were often identical with the Sarkars.

2 The Amil was the head of the pargana administration under the Mughals. It was his duty to see that all the procedures regarding assessment and realization of state dues were followed honestly. The office of Amin had existed in Sultanat period. It was revived in Shahjahan's time by Islam Khan who appointed an Amin in every pargana and made him responsible for assessment while the Amil was left with police duties and the realization of state demand, I.H. Qureshi, Administration of the Mughal Empire, p. 232. Since the promulgation of Ain-i-Dahsala and the implementation of the Zabti system the experiments introduced by Islam Khan did not have much justfication and the offices of *Amil and Amin* had been combined.

3 Rai Bharamal, Lubbu-i-tawarikh-i-Hind Eng.trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 171 Author was Brindaban, son of Rai Bharamal who was the diwan of Dara Shikoh hence the author was initiated into a knowledge of public affairs.

that Sadullah Khan was suspected of favouring the nobles by allowing the Mutaliba[1] against them to accumulate without calling them to pay up. This left a negative effect on finances of the empire.

Sadullah Khan died in April 1656[2] A.D.. On losing an advisor, whom he called his 'sincere well-wisher', Shah Jahan appointed Mir Jumla as the next *Diwan-i-Kul* or *Diwan-i-Alam* of the empire[3]. However, the record of his handling of financial problems is very limited. The few references that are found regarding his revenue and financial matters relate only to the Deccan which prove that he was mainly being used by Aurangzeb to further his case before the emperor. When Aurangzeb, as the viceroy, faced problems owing to *jagirs* yielding only a small part of their value he was helped by Mir Jumla to sort out these difficulties and thus acted as the ambitious prince's guide .[4]

On his accession to the throne Aurangzeb continued to enjoy the services of Muazzam Khan (Mir Jumla) as *Wazir* and awarded him distinctions, including a mansab of haft hazari 7,000 zat 7,000 sawar .

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1 The emperor used to order advances to be made to mansabdars especially when they went on an expedition (known as Masaidat). This was, however, converted into cash claim against the officer concerned and was called Mutaliba (treasury claim). Mutaliba was "money lent out of the Kings Cussena (Khazana) to Umharaes (Umara) when they were employed in any war to be repaid out of their jageeris" (jagirs), English factories 1655 – 60 , p .67.

2 Inayat Khan, Shah Jahan Nama, Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 118; Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 61; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 643; Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, The Life of Mir Jumla the General of Aurangzeb, p. 126; On Sadullah Khan's death, Rai Raghunath who was in the Daftar-i-Khalsa o'tan officiated as Diwan for three months and given the title of Rai Rayan.

3 Mir Jumla held the office of Diwan for nearly fifteen months under Shah Jahan from his appointment in July 1656 A.D. till his dismissal in September 1657 A.D. Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part I, p. 191; Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 62 fn. 12; Jadunath Sarkar, History of Aurangzib, Vol. II, pp. 120-126; Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, The Life of Mir Jumla-General of Aurangzeb, p. 127.

4 When Mir Jumla was deputed to the Deccan, he was to leave the seal of the Wazir with his son Mohammad Amin Khan who was to look after the administrative and revenue affairs of the empire with the help of Rai Rayan. Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 69.

and a reward of one lakh rupees in cash,[1] but his position continued to be handicapped due to conditions beyond his control as his government was primarily concerned with military expeditions and maintenance of law and order. But Mir Jumla tried to promote the welfare of peasants and strictly enforced orders against oppression and plunder on the part of Mughal armies.[2]

His successors Jafar Khan and Asad Khan also did not contribute significantly towards such measures.[3] Although Jafar Khan had the competence to contribute fruitfully towards financial arrangements, he remained in office for too short a duration[4] to leave a mark. Moreover his growing age also prevented him from taking any enthusiastic endeavours. Asad Khan the last and the most efficient *Wazir* of Aurangzeb who enjoyed a long tenure of almost thirty years also spent most of his time in the Deccan and therefore had no major role to play in the financial affairs of the empire.

The *Wizarat* under Aurangzeb on account of excessive centralization of power in Aurangzeb's hands could not make any significant contribution to the growth of the revenue department which happened to be the their principal domain. Moreover, their preoccupation in military pursuits also explains their lack of initiative in introducing changes in revenue administration[5] whereas in the changed circumstances of the eighteenth century adequate reforms were needed. The failure to bring about these reforms explains the beginning of the economic crisis which formed an under current to the

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1 Aqil Khan Razi, Waqiat-i-Alamgiri, p. 123; Laiq Ahmad, Prime Ministers of Aurangzeb, p. 61; Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, Life of the Mir Jumla, p. 151.

2 S.N.Bhattacharya, A History of Mughal North-Eastern Frontier Policy, Spectrum Pub. 1998, p. 345.

3 Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 212.

4 Jadunath Sarkar, History of Aurangzib, Vol. III, p. 65 gives the year of appointment as 1666 which seems incorrect. He was appointed Wazir-i-Azam on 30th Dec. 1663 A.D. and died on 6th May 1670 A.D.

5 Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 262.

seventeenth century in Aurangzeb's time and which worsened during the time of his successors.[1]

Khafi Khan who had worked as an officer at the *pargana* level has compared the conditions of cultivation of his own time with the level of prosperity in that of Akbar's. He expresses concern at the indifferent attitude of *Wazirs* and the revenue farmers (*Ijaradars*) towards the suffering of the peasants[2] and sees their direct role in the steady decline in the state of cultivation as a major factor in decay of the Mughal empire.[3] Besides other factors responsible for the crisis in the agrarian system of the Mughals, the passive role of the Mughal *Wazir* along with the Mughal emperor can hardly be understated, specially in context of their tremendous contributions in the field earlier.[4]

B. CONTRIBUTION IN TRADE AND COMMERCE

India had traditionally been a self supporting country though trade had always been a consistent part of her history. At the height of

1 In the seventeenth and eighteenth century Indian society had no wish to change, despite contact with the west, but wished to retain its traditional form. C.R.Boxer, The Dutch Seaborne Empire, 1600-1800, p. 194; Ashan Jan Qaisar, The Indian Response to European Technology and Culture, 1498-1707, O.U.P. Delhi, 1998, p.1.

2 Khafi Khan, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Vol. I, pp. 157-158; Anees Jahan Syed in Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab remarks " It is owing to this, plots of ten Kurohs and twenty Kuroks of arable land remain uncultivated, in place of cultivated fields, thorny trees scratch the skirts of travelers. pp. XVIII, XIV; Bhim Sain Burhanpuri, Tarikh-i-Dilkusha, Eng. trans. V.G. Khobrekar, Bombay, 1972, p.229 remarks, "Some years before two Shah Jahani maunds of grain sold for a rupee but now owing to devastation of the whole country of Telingana not more than twelve seers can be had"

3 Syed Dawood Ashraf, "Factors contributing to the Decline of the Economic conditions in the Mughal Deccan (1658-1707) in M.A. Nayeem, Anirudh Ray, K.S. Mathew, ed., Studies in the History of the Deccan: Medieval and Modern, p.132, remarks that disappearance of economic prosperity resulted in exhorbitant prices of food grains that were once very cheap.

4 Khafi Khan who had observed the economic conditions of the Mughal empire for fifty two years was disturbed at the degeneration of the bureaucracy which was corrupt and clique ridden. Anees Jahan Syed, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. XVI.

its power the Mughal empire had bestowed on India, political unity as well as, a network of inland trade which was fostered by an environment of peace and active encouragement to an expanding overseas commerce.[1] The tendency towards induced trade through transfer of rural surplus to the towns formed the basis for such commercial expansion.[2] Although some scholars believe that Mughal empire was only marginally interested in sea-borne trade,[3] the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries witnessed considerable growth in shipping and trade.[4] The researches of Tapan Ray Chaudhuri, Ashin Das Gupta, M.N. Pearson and Arsaratnam agree that the Mughal emperors, princes and nobility all participated in overseas trade.[5] Since there is very little statistical information in the Ain-i-Akbari or later Indian sources, studies in Mughal foreign trade have been largely based on European sources.

Since the Mughal nobility was not bound to the land and their jagirs were transferred from one place to another they could not isolate themselves from the commercial world. Moreso, as there was no legal ban on private trade by the state,[6] officials indulged in commercial

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1 Dharma Kumar, ed. The Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol. II, Oreint Longman , New Delhi, 1982, p. 3.

2 Seema Alavi ed. Debates in Indian History and Society, O.U.P., 2002, p. 61.

3 Shireen Moosvi, "Shipping and Navigation under Akbar", P.I.H.C., Calicut, 1999, p. 257.

4 Ishrat Alam, "Dutch Trade in Awadh, Farmans of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb", P.I.H.C., Bhopal, 2001, p. 256; Radhika Seshan, "Trade and Politics, seventeenth Century Coromandel Coast", P.I.H.C., Bhopal, December 2001, p. 289.

5 Ashin Das Gupta, Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat Wiesbaden , 1979; M.N. Pearson, Merchants and Rulers in Gujrat, Berkeley, 1976; Ashin Das Gupta and M.N. Pearson ed. The Sixteenth Century in India and the Indian Ocean, 1500-1800, Calcutta 1987, p.251; Satish Chandra, Essays on Medieval Indian History, O.U.P., New Delhi, 2003, p. 234.

6 There are a number of farmans, nishans and parwanas that indicate the state policy encouraging commercial activity. Kamal Kishore Das, Economic History of Mughal India – an annotated Bibliography, Santiniketan Print Works, Calcutta, 1991, p. 49.

activity.[1] The nobility accumulated enormous treasures and further increased it by investing in trade either by indulging in trade themselves or by making advances in capital to merchants.

Although the interest in shipping and trade became clearer in late sixteenth century only after extension of Mughal rule in Gujrat in 1572 A.D.[2] and the influence of its overseas trade on India's economy, the trend existed ever since the time of Timur who emphasised the development of commerce and industry. The establishment of markets and a continuous flow of trade under him had promoted political as well as economic contacts both within and outside the empire.[3]

There is dearth of information about trading activity of the royalty and the nobility under Babur and Humayun. The circumstances in which they ruled did not favour any such endeavour but by the time Akbar acquired the throne, the nobility was aware of the importance of trade and the possibilities of making profit in commercial ventures. Abul Fazl remarks, "When an appropriate means of maintenance is secured it is permitted to indulge a little in commercial speculation and engage in remunerative undertakings".[4] Scholars like Ashin Das Gupta and M.N. Pearson however assert that during Akbar's time the economic importance of ocean trade was negligible (only five percent of his total revenue coming from sea customs) although some of the land-based revenues were related to

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1 Ahmad Raza Khan, "Mughal Administration and trade in the State of Bihar" (1582-1707).P.I.H.C., Bombay, 1980, pp. 310-316; Satish Chandra ed. Essays in Medieval Indian Economic History, Munshi Ram Manohar Lal, Delhi, 1987, p. 165

2 Shireen Moosvi, "The Economy of Gujrat c. 1600. The Ain Statistics" in Satish Chandra ed. Essays in Medieval Indian Economic History, p.117; Ashin Das Gupta doubts the changes that must have come about by the inclusion of Gujrat in Akbar's Empire as the problems of integration of markets could not be solved due to the absence of data required for it. Uma Das Gupta, ed. The World of the Indian Ocean Merchant (1500-1800), Collected Essays of Ashin Das Gupta, O.U.P., New Delhi, 2001, p. 263.

3 Syed Jamaluddin, The State under Timur, Haranand Pub. New Delhi, p. 67.

4 Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. II, Eng. Trans. H.S. Jarrett, p. 57.

sea-trade.[1] Pearson further remarks, "The revenue resources of the Mughal empire were still so overwhelmingly from the land — a fact that helped to create a North Indian Muslim elite ethos which was again oriented to the land".[2] Although the emperor and the nobility appreciated the benefits of foreign commerce and the revenue it brought, it did not take initiative in protecting it on the way and all ships from Gujrat to the Red Sea were content to sail under the license from the Portugese.[3] Although Akbar engaged himself in trading and increased his wealth by exploiting every possible source of profit,[4] the initial overseas travelling experience was primarily religious, with underlying economic motivations.[5] Besides this it was also used as a useful way to banish unwanted elements from close imperial circles.[6] The awareness of possibilities of economic growth was gradually stimulated by the link between Mughal India and Europe.

Akbar's prime ministers who were known to have possessed their own ships were Mirza Aziz Koka who built a ship of his own called 'Ilahi' and set out on haj in 1593 A.D., and Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan, who is said to have owned three ships 'Rahimi' 'Karimi' and

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1 Ashin Das Gupta and M.N. Pearson ed. India and the Indian Ocean, Calcutta 1987, pp. 53-54; A Statistical analysis by Shireen Moosvi reveals that urban taxation in Gujrat was 18.7% of jam compared with 15.7% in Agra. The Economy of the Mughal Empire, pp. 127-128.

2 M.N. Pearson, The Sixteenth Century in India and the Indian Ocean, 1500-1800. Calcutta, 1987, p. 251.

3 W.H. Moreland, India at the Death of Akbar - an Economic Study, London, 1920, p. 202.

4 Father A. Monserrate, Commentary of Father Monserrate, trans. from Latin by Hayland and Bannerjee, Cuttack, 1928, p. 207.

5 T.R. D'Souza, "Haj. Without Spice, Politics of Religion between Akbar and Portuguese" in Iqtidar Alam Khan ed. Akbar and his Age, p. 106.; Robert Simon, "Akbar in Recent Research and Text Books", I.H.R, Vol. XXII, No. 1-2, p. 65.

6 The two ulemas Makhdum ul Mulk and Shaikh Abdul Nabi and earlier Bairam Khan were allowed to go Haj with the intention of removing them from the court.. M.N. Pearson, Pious Passengers, Motivations for the Haj from Early Modern India, in K.S. Mathew ed. Studies in Maritime History, Pondicherry, 1990, pp. 112-126.

'Salari' mainly to cater to Haj traffic.[1] However, there are references to his commercial interests also.

The economic and technological advancements characteristic of seventeenth century Mughal India were made possible through the distinct contribution of the Mughal nobility[2] and their exposure to certain european cultural and symbolic influences were responsible for their direct participation in trade. The interests of royalty and nobility in trade was to a great extent aimed at procurement of rare and costly articles and the supply of well-bred horses from Arabia, Iran and Iraq. However, a significant point about business venture of nobles was that they traded because it was an easy way to make money through the use of their political power and not because of any keen interest in it or being qualified for the task. Another factor that stimulated the attitude of the nobility towards trade can be understood through the growing Iranian influence and their tradition of combining 'imarat' and 'tijarat' (state craft and trade) in the first half of the seventeenth century.[3]

Under Jahangir also, overseas trade was inextricably linked with the pilgrimage needs of the Muslim population. The nature of involvement of Indian officials (including prime ministers like Asaf Khan and Mir Jumla) varied from time to time. Research in the Dutch archives has shown that ships at the Bengali ports in the seventeenth century were largely owned by the Mughal aristocrats.[4] Although such

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1 Shireen Moosvi, "Shipping and Navigation under Akbar", P.I.H.C. Calicut, 1999, p. 259.

2 Irfan Habib, The Techpology and Economy of Mughal India"; Indian Economic and Social History Review, Vol. XVII, No. 1 pp. 4-5; Surendra Gopal, "Nobility and the Merchantile Community in India, in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," Journal of Indian History, Vol. 50, 1972, p. 797.

3 Sanjay Subramanyam, "Iranians Abroad, Intra Asian Elite Migration and Early Modern State Formation", The Jounral of Asian Studies, Vol. I, 1992, pp. 340-363.

4 Uma Das Gupta, The World of the Indian Ocean Merchant 1500-1800, Collected Essays of Ashin Das Gupta, O.U.P., 2001, p. 93.

endeavors accounted for small portion of all commerce, it was a significant development.

Wazirs like Asaf Khan were known for indulging in private trade Since the Persian nobility and bureaucracy were combined into one, the nobles who held important administrative charges were in a position to put pressure upon merchants and traders. As the Prime Minister was authorised to purchase in the name of the king (who had the first right to purchase) any novelty that they fancied gave ample opportunity to Asaf Khan to indulge in trade.[1] The relationship between the nobility and mercantile community helps us to understand the economic forces operating in the society and the role of their political authority in helping or hindering them.[2]

Asaf Khan, who held the most important position under Jahangir and Shah Jahan, had vast commercial interests and traded on his own account through which he amassed fabulous wealth. He took an active part in sea – borne trade from Hugli and Surat and even maintained an active correspondence with the Portuguese at Goa to this end.[3] Asaf Khan became the point man for Europeans in their efforts to establish trading contracts and was motivated entirely by his opportunist temperament. Infact, he was the only one in the so-called Nur Jahan Junta to be known to European traders, who saw in him a man through whom lucrative trading agreements could be negotiated, as Jahangir had appointed him the chief negotiator with the English.[4]

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1 English Factories in India, 1622-23, p. 209.

2 Surendra Gopal, "Nobility and the Mercantile Community in India in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", Journal of Indian History, Vol. 50, 1972, p. 793.

3 Sanjay Subramanyam, The Portugese Empire in Asia – 1500-1700 : A Political and Economic History, London, 1993, pp. 166-167.

4 In a letter to King James on 8th August, 1618, Jahangir said "The care of this matter, trade, has been committed to Asaf Khan who has been instructed to grant the English all their desires". English Factories, 1618-1621, p. 38.

There is reference to Asaf Khan indulging in private trade as well. In 1622 A.D. when the English, with a view to putting pressure on the Mughal emperor to open Red Sea trade for them, seized a number of Indian ships returning from Mocha, one of these ships belonged to Asaf Khan.[1] During this time the nobility along with the royalty possessed their own ships that carried their own cargo and the cargo of other merchants. This contributed towards generating considerable interest in shipping.[2]

Asaf Khan's control over leading transactions is revealed from the fact that when the Dutch and English refused to make an agreement with the emperor, whose farman with regard to indigo trade was objectionable to them, it was Asaf Khan, the *Vakil*, who was approached. His intervention proved to be highly effective and the emperor agreed to their representation and issued a farman releasing 'indigo into accustomed liberty'. [3]

During the first decade of Shah Jahan's reign, when Asaf Khan was at the helm of affairs there was a visible change in the Mughal policies towards the English. Asaf Khan's contact with the English led to a phase of greater cooperation between them.[4] Between 1640-1641 A.D. Asaf Khan and Emperor Shah Jahan invested one lakh rupees in cloth at Ahmedabad and Mocha and ordered weavers and dyers not to cater to anyone until the royal order was supplied.[5] The imposition of such monopolies acted as a burden for the traders and also disrupted

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1 The English Factories in India, 1622-23, pp. 204, 264.

2 A.J. Qaiser, "Merchant Shipping in India during the Seventeenth Century, Medieval India - A Miscellany", Vol. II, 1972, p.204.

3 Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, Studies in Economic Life of Mughal India, , Oriental Publications, New Delhi, pp. 199-200.

4 Aditi Govil, "Mughal Perception of English Trade in India" , P.I.H.C.,Calicut, 1999, p.1160. The paper argues that in the ultimate success of English in India, an important factor was their alliance with the Mughal officials.

5 Dagh Register (38) 1640-41, p. 308; Tapan Ray Chauduri, "The State and the Economy" in Tapan Ray Chaudhuri and Irfan Habib, ed., The Cambridge Economic History of India, , Vol. I, p. 183.

the normal flow of exchange of goods. Self centred activities like these where the emperor and premier nobles used their authority to corner the market must have had negative implications for traders and manufactures.

As far as Asaf Khan's role in trading transactions between the Mughal empire and the English was concerned, he was selfish and practised outright duplicity, and although Sir Thomas Roe, the English representative at his court, pledged trust in him as he could not annoy the minister for fear of ruining his chances of finalising commercial agreements, he did not trust his intentions.[1]

Sadullah Khan, the most illustrious of Shah Jahan's Diwans was also known to have established private trade. However, contrary to the view that Mughal officials were apathetic to the interests of the merchants, Sadullah Khan seems to have keenly watched and protected the interests of the merchant community as is proved by a *'Hasb ul Hukm'*[2] issued by him dated 10th September 1645 A.D. The order was in response to a complaint of Mir Sharfuddin Hussain and Mir Hashim Yakub, officials of Surat, regarding English keeping weapons at their factories, erecting boundaries and employing Indians to guard their factories. Sadullah Khan's order held these as gross violations of the established customs and ordered them not to do so. [3]

Among Mughal *Wazirs*, Mir Jumla, the aggressive lieutenant of Aurangzeb, has attracted considerable attention for indulging in commercial enterprises on such a large scale that he can be called the prince of merchants. He is a striking example of a merchant turning

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1 Thomas Roe in William Foster, ed., The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul, (1615-1619), as narrated in his journal and Correspondence.

2 Hasb-ul-Hukm was an order issued by a minister on the instructions of the Emperor. Irfan Habib, Agrarian System of Mughal India, 1556-1707, p. 325.

3 Farhat Hussain, "Mughal Officials at Surat and their relations with the English and Dutch Merchants" Based on a collection of Persian documents of the reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan, P.I.H.C., 1989, p. 285.

into a statesman. Writing on men like him, Manucci suggests they combined the profession of warriors and merchants and treated their admission into the ranks of courtiers as a kind of business investment.[1]

Mir Jumla's commercial activities offer the most noteworthy example of business investments of a Mughal *Wazir* under Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb. Shah Jahan's rule did not encourage trade because the policies of Akbar and Jahangir were subjected to reservations governed by the theory that those in authority should get the highest profit from it, rather than that it should foster its improvement.[2] Infact, it was the greed of the officials that was the most important factor that crippled trade.[3]

Very often the involvement of senior nobles like Mir Jumla in commercial enterprises was dubious in nature because the capital invested by him came partly from the empire's revenue resources. Like Shah Jahan, Mir Jumla, as the Prime Minister, also created monopolies to augment his income. Infact his economic system in Karnataka and Bengal was based on monopoly.[4] He charged monopoly prices and controlled internal production of all known and unbleached cloth and sold them at a profit of twenty percent. Similarly grain and paddy were also his strict monopoly. This kind of private trade or Sauda-i-khas proved to be a great source of extortion.[5] The English in Madras could not sell anything except the articles purchased from the Nawab's men at prices fifty percent higher than those prevailing in the

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1 Manucci, Storia do Mogor, 1653-1708 A.D., Vol. II, p. 453.

2 Richard Burn, ed., Cambridge History of India, Vol. IV, The Mughal Period, S. Chand and Co., 1963. p. 218.

3 D. Pant. Commercial Policy of the Mughals, , Kitab Mahal, Bombay, 1930, p. 201.

4 Satish Chandra, "Commercial Activities of the Mughal Emperors during the seventeenth Century", P.I.H.C., Guwahati, 1959, p. 264.

5 Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, Studies in Economic Life of Mughal India, Oriental Publishers, New Delhi, 1975, p. 181.

neighbourhood.[1] In 1660 A.D., he offered the English factories large amount of salt petre for his personal profit. The following year, he made an extraordinary levy in Bengal demanding fifty thousand rupees from the grain merchants of Dacca on the pretext that the latter had made twice the amount of profit.[2] He entered into frequent business deals with the English and advanced money to them[3] and was called a 'merchant prince' whose ships traded between Arrakan, Southern India and Persia. His interest in sea borne trade is revealed in the following passage:

> *"You (chamber and his colleagues) will perceive by the coppy of our general consultation that we have condescended and agreed, for the preservation of Nabob's amity, that now the junk cannot be restored, he may take his choice either of the 'Anne' with all her ammunition and the stores or of your new built ship .... you know the nabob is five times more indebted to us by his accompt; besides he doth yearly make use (of us) as this last year with twenty five tons of gumlacke whereof he pays no freight nor custom in Persia".*[4]

Aurangzeb is believed to have deplored and even prohibited the Sauda-i-khas indulged in by bureaucrats and officials.[5]

Jafar Khan and Asad Khan, the other two prime ministers under Aurangzeb, although preoccupied with the prolonged war in the Deccan did not isolate themselves from the commercial world entirely. Jafar

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1 Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, "Corruption in Public Life in Medieval India", Q.R.H.S., Vol. VI, No. 1, 1966-67, pp. 85-86.

2 Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, Studies in Economic Life of Mughal India, p. 183.

3 "Mr. Trewisa was urged to repay the money lent to him by Mir Jumla and was again reminded of the necessity of a large supply of Saltpetre", The English Factories in India, 1661-64, p. 153.

4 The English Factories in India, 1661-64, pp. 148-149.

5 Lakshmi Subramaniam, "India's International Economy" 1500-1600 A.D. I.H.R, Vol. XXV, No. 2, 1998, p. 46.

Khan was undoubtedly the link between the emperor and foreign merchants and all commercial transactions were conducted through him and it was not easy for the English, French and Dutch merchants to bypass him in their attempt to secure concessions from the emperor. When the English, desiring duty free import and export of articles at Surat port, approached the *Wazir* for a 'hasb-ul-hukm', his recommendation made the emperor grant the desired order to them.[1] On the expiry of this concession, Jafar Khan's intervention led to reducing the duty on english goods from three and a half to two percent. He is known to have granted concessions to French factors as well as convincing the emperor to allow them to set up factories in India.[2]

Jafar Khan's familiarity with the weakness of Mughal shipping when confronted with European naval powers and his desire to improve it is seen in his remark to Aurangzeb, "there is no deficiency of money or timber or other materials for a navy but there is lack of men to direct"[3].

Asad Khan who enjoyed the longest tenure as Aurangzeb's *Wazir* for almost thirty years was also instrumental in trade negotiations. When Aurangzeb, who was surrounded by internal problems of piracy being faced by Indian merchants and wanted to take necessary action, it was Asad Khan who issued the 'Parwana'[4] to the Governor of Surat to exercise pressure on English, Dutch and French to pay compensation to the emperor's subjects and "unless written guarantees were not given

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1 A letter dated May 19th, 1664 A.D., says, "the King has granted to all, customs free, for one whole year for all that shall be either exported or imported ... we have received a letter from Gaffere Khan (Jafarkhan) the king's Diwan which is called Hasb-ul-Hukm." The English Factories in India, 1661-1664, pp. 314-315.

2 The English Factories in India ,1665-67, p. 281.

3 Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, "Seeds of Economic Decline in the Century before Plassey", Q.R.H.S., Vol. XXII, 1982-83, pp. 12-13.

4 'Parwana' was an order, a grant or a letter under royal seal; a letter of authority from an official to his subordinate.

that the pirates would stop their activities; the English, Dutch and the French would not be allowed to reside and trade in his dominions".[1] In 1691 A.D. Asad Khan issued a *'hasb-ul-hukm'* formalising the duty exemption status to the European companies subject to an annual tribute of three thousand rupees.[2]

Aurangzeb's confidence in Asad Khan's potential in handling European traders is revealed in his consulting his *Wazir* on failing to arrive at a settlement with them in 1701 A.D. and the latter issuing an order seizing their settlements and stopping their trade. Infact with the setting up of the East India Company in accordance with the Royal Charter of 1698 A.D., the meeting of William Norris with the Emperor was arranged by Asad Khan. The English representative all through tried to keep Asad Khan in good humour.[3] However, later he fell victim of wrong advice and abstained from the *Wazir*'s company. The importance of Asad Khan in commercial and trade transactions is revealed in Norris's failure in securing the required farman for the East India Company because of his inability to maintain cordial relations with the *Wazir.*

While there is evidence of nobles investing capital in commercial enterprises their interest was not always confined to making profit by honest means. They often obstructed the free flow of trade to enhance their income through misuse of their power. Bribery was common before they granted required privileges to traders. Mir Jumla, for instance, stopped the English trade at Kasim Bazaar until some

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1 Harihar Das, The Norris Embassy to Aurangzeb, Calcutta, 1959, p. 23.

2 Om Prakash, The New Cambridge History of India, European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-Colonial India,, p. 134.

3 "The delays and disappointments I have met with here have been more irksome because they kept me so long from the most noble Victorian and great Asad Khan whose friendship I shall esteem dearer than my life." Letter of William Norris to Asad Khan quoted in Laiq Ahmad, Prime Ministers of Aurangzeb, p. 141.

presents were offered to him.[1] In 1660 A.D. he demanded twenty thousand pagodas from the English factories and also asked them to remit thirty two thousand pagodas which he owed to the company.[2] Similarly in 1667 A.D. the French succeeded in securing a farman for trade from the emperor only when they gave ten thousand rupees to Jafar Khan. On receiving the amount Jafar Khan permitted them to hire a house in Surat,[3] proving that corruption was prevalent in securing commercial deals. Tavernier remarks :

> *" So true it is that those who desire to do business at the court of princes should not commence anything unless they had an open purse for diverse officers of trust whose service they may need".*[4]

It may be concluded that whenever Mughal *Wazirs* participated in trade it was through misuse of their official position to further their mercantile interests. By establishing their monopolies they hindered a free growth of economic activity of the country. Prime Ministers like Mir Jumla hoarded wealth but the empire suffered. The commercial decline of Surat is indicative of the general decline of the empire. Dutch records mention the gradual decline in the number of Indian ships at

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1 William Foster, ed., The English Factories in India, 1655-60, pp. 292-293; Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, The Life of Mir Jumla, The General of Aurangzeb, pp. 4-5; Sinnappah Arsaratnam, Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast, 1650-1740, O.U.P., Delhi, 1986, p. 225.

2 Ibid. pp.391-392.

3 The English Factories in India, 1665-1967, p. 281.

4 Tavernier, Travels in India,, Vol. I, p.115 William Foster, ed., The English Factories in India 1655-60, pp. 197-198. On the death of Mir Jumla, the English traders had to face great difficulty in getting their parwanas renewed. Tapan Ray Chaudhari and Irfan Habib, ed., The Cambridge Economic History of India,, Vol. I, p. 186.

Surat from eighty seven in 1693 A.D. to an average of thirty two in 1716 A.D. and falling to nineteen in 1741 A.D.[1]

Positive contribution of prime ministers in boosting trade was limited to creating awareness for overseas trade through personal examples and becoming the link between the Mughal emperors and the european traders. They were instrumental in establishing contact with the europeans by their initiative but failed to realise that control of trade routes was an essential requirement and continued to depend on Europeans for this.

It is believed that the dwindling economy of the Mughal empire was also accompanied by a general decline. Inspite of extensive contact with foreigners, the Mughal nobility along with royalty failed to adopt foreign technology either in shipping or navigation or in artillery and military organization and this is one of the reasons that led to it being overpowered and conquered by the Europeans.[2] Mughal prime ministers who were supposed to advise the emperor on issues related to economic development of the empire could to some extent be held responsible for the capture of external and internal trade by European companies and the ultimate ruin of the economy.

C. CONTRIBUTION IN URBANIZATION

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were a golden age of urbanization for most of northern and central India.[3] When compared with medieval Europe where a town with a population of twenty

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1 Ashin Das Gupta, Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat 1700-1750, Wiesbaden, 1979, p. 283; Seema Alavi, ed., The Eighteenth Century in India – Debates in Indian History and Society, O.U.P., New Delhi, 2002, p. 62.

2 Ahsan Jan Qaisar, The Indian Response to European Technology and Culture, 1490-1707, p. 1.

3 Akbar's Empire in 1592 is said to have contained as many as 120 cities and 3,200 townships, Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol.III, pp. 545-46; Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, Mughal Economy : Organization and Working, Naya Prakashan, Calcutta, 1987, p. 213.

thousands was considered a big one, the towns in medieval India judged by their number and size was an impressive one.

Although it is difficult to estimate the number of people living in towns, the urban heritage of the Mughals makes a rich and fascinating study. Some of the important changes in the social structure of the Mughals from that of the Sultanat were the stratification of rural society; growth of urbanization, and an emergence of a class of master artisans.[1] As a British resident observed, "the Mughals, magnificent and ostentatious required every article of luxury; towns and cities grew out of this spirit".[2] Infact Satish Chandra observed that urbanization in India during the seventeenth century was much higher than what it was in British India at the beginning of the century.[3] According to an estimate about two hundred urban settlements including, large, and small towns emerged during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Their origin, growth and location is important keeping in view the economic activities they generated.

Interest in urbanization can be traced as early as Timur who breaking from Chingez Khan's tradition in a major way started building fortresses and city walls.[4] He must have realised the importance of cities for the existence and sustenance of a large aristocracy and planned to make Samarqand the first city in the world.

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1 Irfan Habib, The Economic History of Medieval India – A Survey, Tulika, New Delhi, 2001, p. 33

2 C. Halet, Resident Poona to the Governor General, 8th August 1780, Banaras Affairs, Part I, Allahabad, 1959, p. 143.

3 Satish Chandra, 'Some Aspects of Urbanization in Medieval India' in Indu Banga, ed., The City in Indian History, Manohar , 1994, p. 81; I.P. Gupta, 'Conceptualizing the Urban' Ibn Khaldun and the Urban settlements in Medieval India with special reference to the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", P.I.H.C., 1989-90, p. 344.

4 In 1365-66 A.D. Timur constructed walls around the town of Qarchi and in 1370 A.D. the walls and citadels of Samarqand. Barthold, Four Studies in the History of Central Asia, Vol. I, Eng.trans., Minorsky, Leiden, 1963, p. 60.

Timur was also known to have taken interest in the restoration of other towns like Kish, Qarshi and Baghdad.

With the establishment of Mughal rule in India, emperors and the nobility invested a substantial part of their income in the infrastructure that led to urbanization.[1] Although administrative convenience rather than provision of facilities for economic activity motivated such investments, it did help to stimulate the economy and boost the process of urban development. Besides Lahore, Agra, Shahjahanabad and Fatehpur Sikri provincial capitals like Dacca and Aurangabad were also built by the Mughals, with the nobility contributing their share to the construction of magnificent buildings at these places when they came and settled there.

Among the nobility one finds a distinct contribution by some Mughal prime ministers in encouraging this process by their efforts. Although recorded evidence of such endeavours becomes more pronounced only when Akbar was able to give some strength and vitality to the empire, the evidence that Timur took active interest in urban growth proved that the Mughals had come a long way from the days of their other ancestor Changiz Khan who through his *'Yasas'* forbade the nobility from having permanent dwellings.

Although one does not find a record of building activity by Babur's Prime Ministers, the founder of Mughal rule in India did embark upon several building projects as he states. "six hundred and eighty men worked on my buildings at Agra, Bayana, Dholpur and Gowalior".[2] Humayun's major contribution was the foundation of

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1 R. Ramachandran, Urbanization and Urban System in India,, O.U.P., 2000, p. 17.
2 Babur, Baburnama, Eng. trans. Vol. I and II, p. 520.

Delhi.[1] His palace called Din Panah was not of a great quality nor do the two mosques that have survived Humayun's reign exhibit any outstanding features.

Although the records of Babur's and Humayun's contributions to the building art of the country which have survived are almost negligible, but the indirect influence of their personalities on the subsequent art of the country cannot be overlooked.

> *"Babur's marked aesthetic sense communicated to his successors, inspired them under more favourable conditions to the production of their finest achievements .... Humayun's forced contact with the culture of the Safavids is reflected in that Persian influence noticeable in many of the Mughal buildings which followed".*[2]

A record of building activity under Akbar is brought to us by Abul Fazl, who regards this urban phenomenon essential for the comfort of the people and a source of splendour for the government. He says people that are attached to the world will collect in towns without which there would be no progress. Everywhere buildings and sarais were built for the comfort of travellers.[3] However, Abul Fazl does not record the role of the Mughal nobility in erecting buildings in a major way.

Munim Khan, Khan-i-Khanan, Akbar's *Vakil* in the early phase is said to have constructed or patronized persons who constructed a number of bridges, mosques and madrasas in the vicinity of Jaunpur. The famous bridge over the Gomti at Jaunpur was constructed by

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1 Khwandamir, Humayunama, Eng. trans. p. 53, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. V, pp. 124-126.
2 Percy Brown, Cambridge History of India, Vol. IV, C.U.P., Cambridge, p. 525.
3 Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 232.



The Bridge constructed by Munim Khan over the river Gomti at Jaunpur

Munim Khan.[1] It was constructed in 1564 A.D. by workmen imported from Hazara.[2] Munim Khan's bridge which is still in use, is generally recognized as Jaunpur's most significant Mughal structure. This must have improved transport and communication that led to making Jaunpur an important urban centre which thrived on account of its trade, karkhanas and bazaars. It even emerged as a centre of Islamic learning. Khairuddin's Tazkirat-i- Ulema gives an interesting account of the numerous educational institutions of the city which were patronized by the emperors and the nobility.[3]

Munim Khan built another bridge over the river Sai at a place now called Pulguzar connecting Jaunpur with Allahabad. Another bridge over the same river (ten and a half miles from Jaunpur) connecting Jaunpur with Banaras was repaired by Munim Khan.[4] Another bridge over river Tons at Akbarpur connecting Jaunpur, with Faizabad was constructed by Mohsin Khan, darogha of Jaunpur, on Munim Khan's instructions.[5] Since rivers intercepted the straight, and even progress of roads, bridges were very useful in facilitating movement of overland travellers and merchants.

Munim Khan, Khan-i-Khanan, is also known to have built a number of public baths and hot baths in different parts of Jaunpur. He also built a palace for himself on the left bank of the river Gomti at

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1 Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 354; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, pp. 291-292; Fuhrer, The Sharqi architecture of Jaunpur, pp. 17-20; District Gazetteers of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Vol. XXVIII, 1908, pp. 234-235; H.K. Naqvi, Urbanization and Urban Centres under the Great Mughals, p. 68; Jean Deloche, Transport and Communications in India, Land Transport, Vol. I, O.U.P., New Delhi, 1993, p. 129; Iqtidar Alam Khan, Political Biography of a Mughal Noble, Munim Khan, Khan-i-Khanan, p. 120.

2 Although Munim Khan had no heirs, his descendant, the Jaunpur bridge "will preserve his name for ages". Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 291; Catherine B. Asher, Architecture of Mughal India, C.U.P., 1995, p. 87.

3 Khair-ud-din, Tazkirat-i-Ulema, ed., M.Sanaullah, Calcutta, p. 7-27, vide A.L. Srivastava, Akbar The Great, Vol. III, Shivalal Agarwala, 1973, p. 181.

4 District Gazetters of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Vol. XXVII, 1908, p. 230.

5 Ibid., p. 186.

Jaunpur although the building was demolished at the end of the eighteenth century. He is also credited with building a forty pillared structure consisting of three retreating storeys inside the fort to be used as his diwankhana,[1] besides rebuilding the rampart and several other structures inside the fort of Jaunpur.

Munim Khan is credited with building the mosque of Shah Shaikhu at Jaunpur to honour the well known saint of his time and a khanqah attached to it. The income from the shops adjoining the khanqah was used for giving financial aid to the students studying in the Madrasa of the mosque.[2]

Mughal prime ministers are also known to have been instrumental in the foundation of new towns and revival of old ones. Raja Todar Mal, is said to have brought about the revival of the town of Benaras.[3] The town witnessed a state of decline during the Sultanat period as well as that of Babur and Humayun, but regained its position as a place of learning and religious centre due to the efforts of Todar Mal and his son Govardhan Das.

Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan, Akbar's Prime Minister in the later part of his reign founded the town of Jahangirpura in Khandesh,[4] although the town made no headway inspite of efforts to place it on the path of progress. Abdur Rahim is also said to have constructed a canal in Burhanpur which carried water from the Tapti river to Lal Bagh to be used for drinking and irrigation.

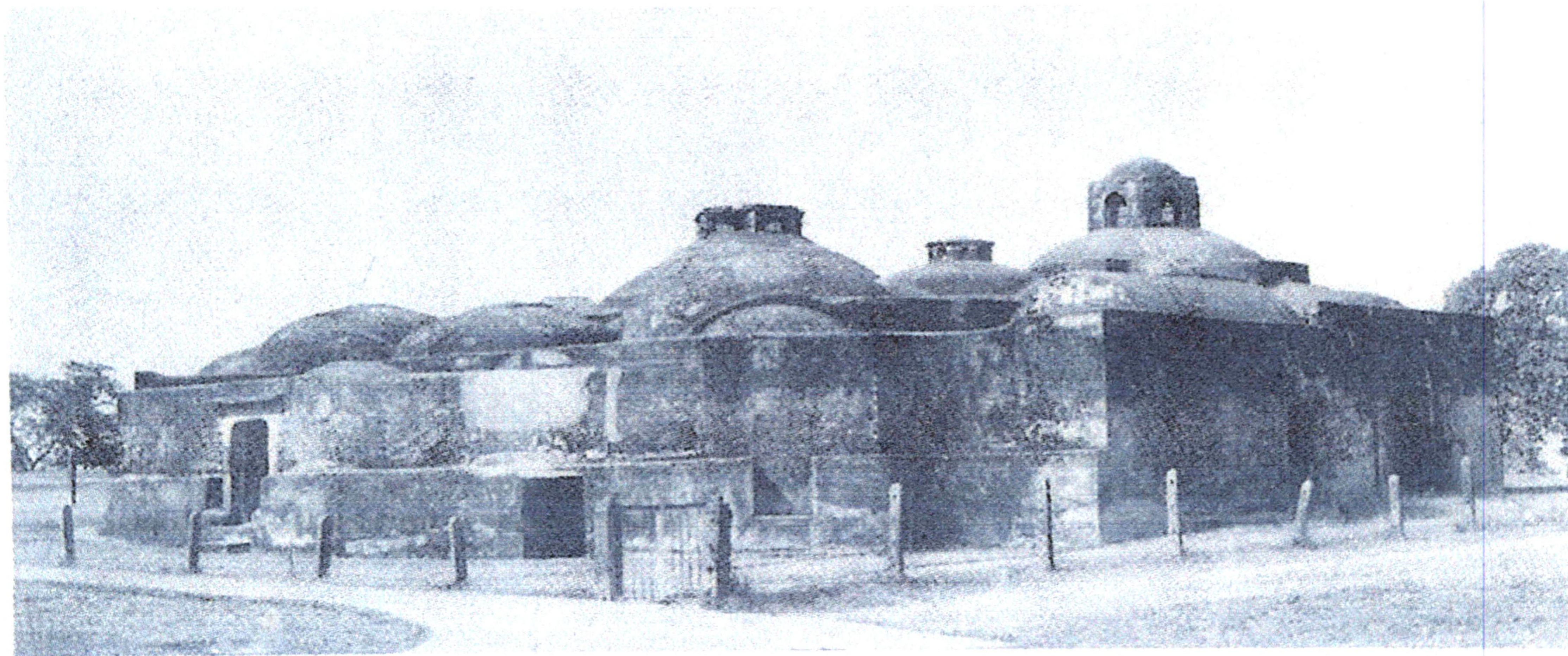
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1 Abul Fazl,Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 296; Fuhrer, Sharqi Architecture of Jaunpur, p. 184.

2 Khairuddin Allahabadi, Tarikh-i-Jaunpur, ff, 46a, 47b, vide Iqtidar Alam Khan, Political Biography of a Mughal Noble, Munim Khan, Khan-i-Khanan, p.122.

3 Manoj Kumar Srivastava, "Social, Political and Religious Conditions in Varanasi during Akbar's Rule", P.I.H.C., 1991, Calcutta, p.365

4 Nihavandi, Maasir-i-Rahimi, Vol. II, pp. 606-607; H.K. Naqvi, Urbanziation and Urban Centres under the Great Mughals, p.12; Munshi Debi Prasad Kayastha, Khani-i-Khanan Nama, Institute of Central and West Asian Studies, Karachi, 1990, p. 51.



A Hamam with arrangement of hot and cold water constructed by Munim Khan at Jaunpur

The Khan-i-Khanan's name is associated with the building of a congregational mosque, a bath, a garden, a tank and a *Mohalla* in Burhanpur which was a very important town under the Mughals. Besides this he laid a garden in Ahmedabad and a *Sarai* and garden in Lahore.[1]

Along with the palaces, pleasure houses and gardens constructed by royalty and nobility there emerged markets, commercial and manufacturing establishments and residential complexes of merchants, shopkeepers and craftsmens. The shifting of administrative machinery along with the basic amenities for inhabitants like mosques, temples sarais, and baths made these localities self sufficient units with regard to their daily requirements[2] Jahangir mentions the residence of Itmad-ud-Daulah, his Prime Minister, on the left bank of Yamuna in his memoirs.[3] These establishments were meant to accommodate their families, personal staff and servants. Asaf Khan also constructed a similar mansion in Lahore. Such endeavours undoubtedly contributed in determining the morphology of urban life.

Mughal prime ministers also contributed towards the religious architecture of their times. Keeping in mind the public character of worship in Islam, growth of towns and cities coincided with the growth of congregational mosques like Jama-i-Masjid (Friday Mosque). Akbar's Prime Minister, Muzaffar Khan, built a jama mosque at Agra near Katra of Miyan Rafiq.[4] According to an archeological survey of the city of

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1 Stephen P. Blake, Shajahanabad, The Sovereign City in Mughal India,, 1639 – 1739, p. 69.

2 I.P. Gupta, Urban Glimpses of Mughal India – Agra the Imperial Capital, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, Discovery Publications, Delhi 1986.

3 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p. 249.

4 This is not the Jama Masjid at Agra which was built by Shah Jahan in 1644 A.D. It was known as Muzaffar Khan Ki Masjid or Kali Masjid. Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Eng, trans. Vol. II, Part I p. 364; Shaikh Farid Bhakkari. Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, Eng. trans. Z.A. Desai, Part I, p. 157.

Shahjahanabad out of four hundred and ten structures in the walled city, two hundred and two (nearly fifty percent) were mosques.[1]

The foundation of the Jami Masjid, the largest mosque in India was laid in 1650 A.D. under the supervision of Sadullah Khan, Shah Jahan's premier noble and Fazil Khan the Khan-i-Saman.[2] It was frequented by a large number of people including the royalty and the amirs. Aurangzeb visited the mosque in 1666 A.D.[3]

Sadullah Khan also constructed a large square (chowk) in the middle of the Khas Bazaar (special bazaar) on the street which connected the Jami Masjid and the palace fortress. Dancing girls, physicians, story tellers and astrologers carried their trades here. The place also had shops that dispensed cloth, medicine, hot food, weapons, fruits, flowers and sugarcane. The great Bazaar, at Chowk Sadullah Khan, as the place came to be known, catered to the entire city and was one of the biggest commercial centres of the time. "Articles of seven divisions of the globe are bought and sold here".[4] Bernier also described the market being well supplied with all goods and a separate market for every commodity.[5]

The growth of the port of Hugli was to some extent due to the efforts of Aurangzeb's Prime Minister Jafar Khan who realised that the prosperity of Bengal depended upon its advantageous commerce and showed great indulgence to traders. The encouragement soon made the port of Hugli a place of great importance. Many wealthy merchants who

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1 Stephen P.Blake, Shahjahanabad, The Sovereign City in Mughal India, 1639-1739. p. 52.

2 Muhammad Salih Kambu, Amal-i-Sahih, Vol. III, p. 51, cited in Stephn P. Blake, Shahjahanbad, The Sovereign city in Mughal India, 1639-1739, p. 52.

3 Akhbarat-i-Durbar-i-Muallah, quoted in Stephen P.Blake, Shahjahanabad, The Sovereign City in Mughal India, , p. 54.

4 Sujan Rai, "Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh in Jadunath Sarkar's India of Aurangzib, VOl. I, Calcutta, 1921, p. 95.

5 Francois Berneir, Travels in the Mogul Empire, pp. 259-60.

lived there had ships of their own and traded with Arabia, Persia and other countries.[1]

An important aspect of economic life of Mughal India was the maintenance of *'Karkhanas'* or workshops[2] by the emperors and the nobility. It was the desire for luxuries and other articles made according to their own specifications that led them to maintain such establishments where a large number of workers were employed to manufacture different things for their use.[3]

Although these workshops had only limited economic significance, as they rarely produced goods for the general market, their impact on urban life and the relations between village and town was tremendous. More than anything else it helped in the mobility of labour from rural to urban centres and in developing techniques and providing employment to craftsmen and training to their apprentices. The *'Karkhanas'* helped the artisans to acquire status on account of occupational specialization and also led to organization of castes and guilds.[4] As Bernier notes, "the embroiderer brings up his son .... no one marries but in his own trade or profession and this custom is observed almost as rigidly by the Muhammadans as by the Hindus".[5]

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1 Infact, Hugli became a Shia colony and a centre of Shia theology and Persian culture before the full growth of Murshidabad and even afterwards, this cosmopolitan port was preferred to the political capital for residence by those Persian migrants who had no employment or family ties to keep them at Murshidabad. Salimullah, Tarikh-i-Bangalah, quoted in Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, Studies in Economic Life of Mughal India, Oreintal Publishers, New Delhi, 1975, p. 222.

2 The word Karkhana, was used in a very wide sense in contemporary Persian, Maratha and Rajasthani sources, for places like animal stables, stores of articles of food and drink besides true manufactories or workshops where raw materials were converted into consumable articles. Tripta Verma, Karkhanas Under the Mughals from Akbar to Aurangzeb, Pragati Publications, New Delhi, 1994, p. 33.

3 Athar Ali, The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb, p. 157.; Irfan Habib, The Economic History of Medieval India, A survey, Tulika, New Delhi, 2001, p. 34.

4 Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, Studies in Economic Life of Mughal India,, p. 216.

5 Francois Bernier, The Travels in the Mogul Empire, 1656-68, p. 259.

Although detailed information about *Karkhanas* maintained by nobles, including prime ministers, is not available one cannot deny that they maintained private workshops according to their position and wealth. The biographical material contained in the histories written under the patronage of Mughal nobles provides information on the inputs made available by certain prime ministers in the manufacture of certain handicrafts. Threre is documented evidence of the interest shown by the Khan-i-Khanan in arts, literature and handicrafts.

In Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan's *Karkhanas,* skilled artisans were frequently rewarded on displaying excellence. One of his servants Muhammad Suleh Beg from Iran was an expert in manufacturing guns which were better than those imported from Europe. Most of the craftsmen under his patronage were very prosperous and found wearing fine cloths.[1]

Arif Qandhari who is the earliest source for Akbar's interest in textile technology remarks, "His Majesty has an eye for the finer things .... so that the work in India is now better than the work of Persia and Europe".[2] An innovative textile designer of the time Ghani Beg Asadabadi who was admired for his art of design making (tarrahi) and Chintz-patterns (ikhtira-i-chit) was in Abdur Rahim's service till 1592 A.D..[3] Another famous designer Aqa Muhammad Shirazi also enjoyed his patronage. The concern of premier nobles like the Khan-i-Khanan, in industry never went beyond Karkhanas employing artisans for satisfying their need for luxuries and their investments did not necessarily lead to an improvement in the techniques of mass

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1 Abdul Baqi Nihawandi, Maasir-i-Rahimi, Persian text, Vol. III, pp. 683-84, cited in Tripta Verma, Karkhanas under the Mughals from Akbar to Aurangzeb, p. 98.
2 Muhammad Arif Qandhari, Tarikh-i-Akbari, Eng. trans. Tasneem Ahmad, p. 45.
3 Abdul Baqi Nihawandi, Maasir-i-Rahimi, Vol. III, p. 980; Irfan Habib, "Akbar and Technology" in Irfan Habib, ed, Akbar and His India, O.U.P., New Delhi, 1997, p. 133.

production. However, the fact that twenty nine percent of the state's revenue was controlled by the nobility as against fourteen percent by the Emperor[1] shows their dominance in all economic activities during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

In analysing the responsibility of the ruling classes in the economic decline that brought about overall degeneration, the failure to change with time appears significant. The contact with the West was open but the nature, degree and pattern of response to western technology varied. There was a difference in the use of a foreign article and that of acquiring knowhow about its actual manufacturing.[2] Moreover, the ruling class showed interest only in those things that catered to luxury and vice and not European knowledge in science and technology.[3]

There are virtually no known works written in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries showing any influence of European technological advancements on the Indian ruling class.[4] However, some recent scholars do not agree with the view that the Mughal elite were a technically static group of bureaucrats.[5]

However by the beginning of the eighteenth century circumstances had changed drastically. The aristocratic ruling classes

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1 Ahsan Jan Qaisar, "Distribution of the Revenue Resources of the Mughal Empire, among the Nobility" P.I.H.C., 1967, pp. 237-243.

2 Ahsan Jan Qaisar, The Indian Response to European Technology and Culture, 1498-1707, p. 3.

3 Jadunath Sarkar, Fall of the Mughal Empire,, Vol. IV, Orient Longman, 1972, p. 345; Kiran Pawar, Sir Jadunath Sarkar, A Profile in Historiography, Books and Books, New Delhi, 1985, p. 120.

4 Irfan Habib, "Technology and Economy in Mughal India" The Indian Economic and Social History Review, Vol. XVIII, No. 1, 1980, p. 45; The art of printing did not awake even an iota of curiosity even in Fathulla Shirazi, the much admired scientist who served Akbar from 1583 A.D. to 1588 A.D., M.A. Alvi and H. Rahman, Fathullah Shirazi - A sixeteenth century Indian Scientist, New Delhi, 1968, p. 13.

5 Abdul Ghani Khan, "Technology and the Question of Elite Intervention in Eighteenth Century North India" in Richard B. Barnett., ed., Rethinking Early Modern India, Manohar, 2002, p. 268.

no longer received a major share of the empire's total revenue.[1] The Akhbarat of the last years of Aurangzeb's reign are full of complaints from nobles that they were in miserable condition and needed help from the treasury. Bernier wrote, "There are very few wealthy Omrahs; on the contrary most of them are in embarrassed circumstances and deeply in debt".[2] The financial status of the nobility along with the crisis that the empire was in on account of various other factors must have made any desire for army and luxury related innovations lose their significance.

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1 In the beginning of the seventeenth century the share of nobility in the Empire's total revenue was sixty seven percent. Abdul Ghani Khan, "Technology and the Question of Elite Intervention in the Eighteenth Century in North India", in Richard B.Barnett, ed., Rethinking Early Modern India., p. 268.

2 Francois Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire, p. 213.

Chapter - V

PRIME MINISTERS AND POLITICS

The nobility formed an indispensable organ of the monarchical system sharing with the emperor the social responsibility of being the protector for the well being of the people of the realm. Although the Mughal emperor was a despot he could not govern without the cooperation of his nobility whose perceptions and prejudices did play a significant role in defining state policies.

Since the nobility consisted of diverse racial and religious elements, the possibility of mutual jealousies and dissensions was always present. The personal interests of any section of the nobility especially the senior nobles(prime ministers fell under this category) was bound to have an impact on larger issues facing the empire.[1] We therefore find them playing a significant role in court politics right from the inception of the empire under Babur. By virtue of being the senior-most official in administrative hierarchy, the Prime Minister was expected to strike a balance between divergent interests within the political circles; his whims and fancies often influencing his decisions.

By and large Prime Ministers were loyal to the emperor as they knew that their career depended upon his pleasure. However, in dealing with other co-administrators, his decision of siding with one faction or opposing the other often depended upon the extent

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1 Athar Ali, The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb, p. 95.

of advantage he could derive by adopting a certain course of action.

With the establishment of Mughal rule in India under Babur began the trend that reveals the extent to which the senior most in the nobility could get involved in court politics and conspiracies that could influence the course of history.

Nizamuddin Khalifa, Babur's life-long friend and counsellor who was his *Wazir/ Vakil-us-Sultanat*[1] and had served him for thirty five years came to possess tremendous power. Towards the end of Babur's rule owing to the Emperor's illness he plotted to set up Mahdi Khwaja on the throne rejecting the rightful claims of Babur's sons.[2] Gulbadan Begum, Babur's daughter, says both Babur and Khalifa were aware of Humayun's weaknesses and Khalifa could not have planned Humayun's supercession had he not known Babur's mind.[3] However, the fact that the conspiracy for setting aside the assumed heir to the throne and his replacement by Mahdi Khwaja (husband of Babur's elder sister Khanazad Begum) was confined to Amir Khalifa alone, reduces the conspiracy to a prime ministerial plan.

An anecdote regarding the conspiracy is related by Nizamuddin Ahmad, author of *Tabaqat-i-Akbari,* on the authority of his father Muhammad Muqim, who served under Babur, and

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1 Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i- Akbari, Eng. trans. Elliot and Dowson, Vol. V, p. 187, calls him *Vakil*-us-Sultanat. Badaoni gives him the designation of *Vakil* and Wazir-i-Multaq, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Eng. trans. S.A. Ranking, Vol. I, p. 451.

2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Eng. trans. H.Beveridge, Vol. I, p.277; Nizamudin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Elliot & Dowson, Vol. V. p. 187-188; L.F. Rushbrooke Williams, An Empire Builder of the Sixteenth Century, p. 171; William Erskine, History of India, under the first two sovereigns of the House of Taimur, Babur and Humayun, Vol. I, p.514.

3 Gulbadan Begum, *Humayunnama*, Eng.trans. p.25.

from whom he had heard about the episode as Nizammudin Ahmad was born almost twenty years later.[1] He says the Khalifa who was the chief administrator of the state at the time of Babur's death was unsure of Humayun and his ability to successfully govern the empire created by his father and therefore unfriendly to the idea of his succession. Since Mahdi Khwaja was a generous and liberal young man, friendly with the Khalifa, he promised to raise him to the throne. Mahdi Khwaja, however, became haughty and arrogant and began assuming airs even before the plans could be carried out.[2] This is corroborated by Abul Fazl,[3] Ahmad Yadgar,[4] Shahnawaz Khan[5] and Gulbadan Begum,[6] leaving no doubt as to the existence of the conspiracy at the time when Babur on account of his illness was confined to the bed and could do nothing in a situation of powerlessness. The plan was confined to Nizamuddin Khalifa alone and there is no evidence to show that leading amirs were taken into confidence by him.[7]

Although Khalifa's motives are not known, we go by Nizamuddin's phrase that the old counsellor dreaded and suspected the succession of Humayun but he must have been aware of the risk he was taking by setting aside Humayun's

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1 H. Beveridge, Epigraphica Indo Moslemica, ed., G. Yazdani, Mahdi Khwaja, p. 1.
2 Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Elliot & Dowson, Vol. V, p. 187; L.F. Rushbrooke Williams, An Empire Builder of the Sixteenth Century, p. 176, Ishwari Prasad, Life and Times of Humayun,, p. 29; Sri Ram Sharma, Studies in Medieval Indian History , pp. 160-161; Radhey Shayam, Babur, pp. 389-90; William Erskine, History of India under the first Two Sovereigns of the House of Taimur, Babur and Humayun , Vol. I, pp. 514-516.
3 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. I, p. 277.
4 Ahmad Yadgar, Tarikh-i-Shershahi, Asiatic Society of Bengal, pp. 130-131, quoted by Ishwari Prasad in Life and Times of Humayun, p. 30.
5 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara , Eng. trans. H. Beveridge and Beni Prasad, Vol. II, Part I, p. 220.
6 Gulbadan Begum, Humayunnama, Eng. trans. H. Beveridge, pp. 24-25.
7 Ishwari Prasad, Life and Times of Humayun, p. 35.

claims, who on account of being Babur's eldest and favourite son had the unanimous support of the leading amirs. It is quite possible that Humayun's past conduct of being indecisive and one who could sustain only on Babur's strength was the reason behind Khalifa's fears.[1]

Another possible reason could be the Irani-Turani rivalry which compelled Khalifa to ensure his position and gratify his ambition of playing the role of *Wazir-i-Tafwid.*[2] By placing his protege on the throne, he would definitely be enhanching his position as a *Wazir* who could determine state policies. It was also possible that as a sincere well wisher in rejecting the irresolute and pleasure loving Humayun he was furthering the interests of the state by placing a more worthy person on the throne.

Mahdi Khwaja was rash, indolent, extravagant and possessed an evil disposition.[3] Seeing himself supported by the powerful *Wazir,* he began showing signs of arrogance and lost the sympathy of those who could support him. His overbearing attitude made Khalifa feel that if raised to the throne he would do more harm than good and abandoned the plan.[4] The conspiracy therefore did not fail but fizzled out, as the *Wazir* realized that in the Timurid house succession had always been limited to a Timurid and to ignore Babur's sons was full of dangerous

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1 Mohibbul Hasan, Babur, Founder of Mughal Empire in India, p. 151.
2 Radhey Shyam, Babur, p. 389.
3 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. I, p. 227; William Erskine, History of India under the First two Sovereigns of the House of Taimur, Babur and Humayun, Vol. I, p. 514.
4 Ishwari Prasad, Life and Times of Humayun, pp. 36-37.

implications.[1] The Mughal amirs could never have given the same loyalty to Khwaja as they would have given to Humayun. He adopted the course open to a statesman loyal to the empire and rendered his support to Humayun to succeed to the throne that rightfully belonged to him.

The intrigue that was the outcome of dread and suspicion as well as lack of farsightedness was soon buried and Mahdi Khwaja continued to enjoy a position of importance without being deprived of royal favour in anyway. Mir Khalifa's family remained employed in the administration in different capacities.[2] The conspiracy had little practical importance except that it brought discredit to Khalifa's otherwise irrefutable record of committed service to the Mughal house.

Under Humayun also there is an instance of his Prime Minister Qaracha Khan getting involved in a political conspiracy against his benefactor.[3] Qaracha Khan on account of loyal service to Humayun became encouraged by Humayun's indolence towards him[4] and began showing signs of arrogance. In 1545 A.D., Humayun redistributed the powers of the *Vakil* by giving financial functions i.e. the *Diwani* in the hands of the *Wazir*[5] (Khwaja Sultan Muhammad Rishdi) and retaining those of general administration with the *Vakil*, an arrangement not liked

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1 Mohibbul Hasan, Babur, Founder of the Mughal Empire in India,, p. 152.
2 Ishwari Prasad, Life and Times of Humayun, p. 39.
3 Gulbadan Begum, Humayunnama, p. 180; Jauhar Aftabchi, Tazkirat-ul- Waqiat or Private Memoirs of the Mughal Emperor Humayun,, Eng.trans. Major Charles Stewart, p. 86.
4 Humayun used to call him 'Walid-i-Mohtrim' at every official and semi-official function in view of his age and services to the Mughal throne. William Erskine, History of India under the First two Sovereigns of the House of Taimur Babur and Humayun, Vol. II, p. 350.
5 This was being done to use one office against the other, Iqtidar Alam Khan, "Wizarat under Humayun" P.I.H.C., XXIII, 1960, p. 249.

by Qaracha Khan. His instigation brought about the assassination of the *Wazir* Rishdi. The fact that the officials were a party to the murder of the *Wazir* suggests that there was a conflict of interest among the nobles regarding the control of the *Wizarat*. Qaracha Khan held charge of the department of *Diwani* and continued to be the *Vakil*.[1] When in 1547 A.D. Khwaja Ghazi was appointed Mushrif-i-*Diwan* Qaracha Khan resented this and began mustering support against the *Wazir*. Over a trival issue in which the *Diwan* refused to sanction a small amount from the treasury he was infuriated and began demanding his dismissal. When Humayun's efforts to placate him failed,[2] Qaracha Khan joined Kamran who had earlier shown dishonour to him and even threatened to kill his sons.[3] This was an indication of the degradation in the character of Humayun's *Wazir* as he was willing to go to any extent to act against his benefactor to serve his own interests.

When Humayun planned the conquest of Kabul for the third and final time and sent a message of peace to Kamran, it was Qaracha Khan, who was against the surrender of Kabul saying, "We will rather be hung on the gates of Kabul than give it up.[4] In the battle of Charikaran that followed, Kamran was defeated and Qaracha Khan, his advisor, who had shown treacherous infidelity

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1 Iqtidar Alam Khan, Mirza Kamran, A Biographical Study, Asia Pub. House, New Delhi, 1964, p. 34.

2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. I, p. 521; Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol.II, p. 115; Jauhar Aftabchi, Tazkirat-ul-Waqiat, p. 86; Iqtidar Alam Khan, Mirza Kamran -- A Biographical Study, p. 36.

3 Gulbadan Begum, Humayunanama, p. 186; Ishwari Prasad, Life and Times of Humayun, p. 278.

4 Jauhar Aftabchi, Tazkirat-ul-Waqiat, p. 100.

to Humayun was killed.[1] Humayun, therefore lost a formidable enemy in the death of his *Vakil*, Qaracha Khan.

The involvement of a Mughal Prime Minister in court politics and misuse of his power is perhaps no where better illustrated than during the period of Bairam Khan's regency. Bairam Khan as *Vakil-us-Sultanat* enjoyed supreme position in the empire. This position of omnipotence (*Wazir-i-Tafwid*) manifested itself in several actions of the Khan-i-Khanan during his regency of four years (1556-1560 A.D.). To begin with Bairam Khan made use of the slightest opportunity to rid himself of a senior noble, Tardi Beg as the latter had become inconvenient for the *Vakil*'s position in several respects. Tardi beg had been a friend of Babur and like Bairam had rendered valuable service to Humayun both in Humayun's earlier successes and the reconquest of Hindustan.[2]

Soon after Akbar's accession to the throne[3] the Mughals were defeated at Delhi by Hemu owing to the feeble generalship of Tardi Beg. The Khan-i-Khanan who was incharge of all affairs of the administration saw that the destruction of Tardi beg was to his advantage. He sent for him in Akbar's absence and had him beheaded.[4] Later, Bairam Khan impressed upon Akbar that as

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1 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. I, p. 570; Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol.II, p.125; Gulbadan Begum, Humayunama, p. 196; Jauhar Aftabchi, Tazkirat-ul-Waqiat , p. 101; Ishwari Prasad, Life and Times of Humayun, Orient Longman, Calcutta, 1955, p. 308; William Erskine, History of India under the First two sovereigns of the House fo Taimur, Babur and Humayun, Vol. II, p. 393; Iqtidar Alam Khan, "Wizarat under Humayun", P.I.H.C., 1960, p. 249.

2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. I, p. 316; Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 57; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, part II, p. 941.

3 It was Tardi Beg who recited the Khutba in the name of the Emperor. Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II, p. 941.

4 Tardi Beg Khan along with others was put to death in October, 1556 A.D.. Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 466; Abdul Qadir Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 7.

Tardi Beg had acted disloyally his execution was necessary. He felt leniency at such a critical time, when the only hope for the Mughals lay in every individual exerting himself to the utmost of his ability was undesireable. Although Akbar agreed to this extreme measure taken by the Regent, Abul Fazl strongly felt that left to himself, Akbar would not have agreed to Tardi Beg being killed.[1]

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Farishtah also observes that had Tardi Beg not been punished by way of example, the condition of the Mughal army was so precarious that the old scene of Sher Shah would have been acted over again.[2] The effect of the execution of such an influential man was instantaneous. Bairam Khan's authority over the army was absolutely established but scholars have different views regarding Tardi Beg being guilty and even if he was, whether his action was grave enough to justify Bairam's extreme step of executing him.

Two contemporary authorities Bayazid Bayat and Muhammad Arif Qandhari give contradictory views. Bayazid says Tardi Beg Khan was defeated in the battle and therefore set out for court and Bairam Khan who was opposed to him made his defeat an excuse for executing him.[3] Arif Qandhari who holds Tardi Beg guilty of negligence says he was confused at the ascendancy of Hemu who became victorious in the battle; and the Mughal army

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1 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, pp. 52-53.

2 Muhammad Kasim Ferishtah, History of the Rise of Mohammedan Power in India till the year 1612, Eng. trans. Briggs, Vol. II, p. 187.

3 Bayazid Bayat, Tarikh-i-Humayun wa Akbar, ed., M. Hidayat Hussain Bid. Ind., Calcutta, 1914, p.212 vide Sukumar Ray, Bairam Khan, , p. 136.

being defeated was forced to flee.[1] Abul Fazl, Nizamuddin Ahmad and Abdul Qadir Badaoni also say that Tardi Beg fled from the battle field as he could not resist Hemu successfully; none of them hint at deliberate negligence on the part of Tardi Beg.[2] Even Abdul Baqi Nihawandi, Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan's biographer and Jahangir who refers to the incident in his memoirs[3] does not accuse Tardi Beg of desertion.

Almost all contemporary sources attribute Bairam Khan's action to a personal motive. Badaoni, for instance, states that as Bairam Khan was not well disposed towards Tardi Beg he made the latter's defeat by Hemu an excuse for his execution.[4] Later scholars also reinforce rivalry between the two as the factor that was responsible for Tardi Beg's killing.[5]

However Shaikh Farid Bhakkari and Khafi Khan writing in the eighteenth century tried to acquit Bairam Khan of Tardi Beg's murder as he had turned his back in the battlefield and therefore deserved to be killed.[6] According to Khafi Khan, Akbar appreciated Bairam Khan's stand saying "I have repeatedly declared that the authority is his (Bairam's). He should not entertain fear from any qaurters and pay no heed to rumours of

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1 Muhammad Arif Qandhari, Tarikh-i-Akbari, pp. 72-73.
2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, pp.48-49; Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 215; Sukumar Ray, Bairam Khan, p. 137.
3 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangir, Eng. trans. Vol. I, p. 39.
4 Abdul Qadir Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Eng. trans. Vol. II, pp. 6-7.
5 Iqtidar Alam Khan, "Mughal Court Policies during Bairam Khan's Regency" Medieval India- A Miscellany, Vol. I, 1969, pp. 24-31; Sukumar Ray, Bairam Khan, p. 141; A.L. Srivastava, Akbar the Great, Vol. I, pp. 21-24.
6 Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, Part I, p. 54; Z.U.Mulick, "The Eighteenth Century View of Akbar, in Iqtidar Atam Khan, ed., Akbar and his Age, p. 254.

selfish and jealous persons".[1] Similarly Shah Nawaz Khan also considered Bairam Khan worthy of respect and has upholded the services of the Khan-i-Khanan in restructuring the Mughal rule in North India. However, Tabatabai condemns Bairam Khan for committing some wrongs (nata iqiha) such as assigning productive jagirs to associates and the murder of Tardi Beg.[2]

Irrespective of the factors that motivated this extreme step the impact of this demonstration of power was instant as it replaced any kind of insubordination by the nobility to complete subservience to Bairam Khan. This would lead us to believe that Bairam Khan as *Vakil-us-Sultanat* did great service to the Mughal dynasty but it cannot be ignored that he also considered Tardi Beg who was looked upon by the Chagtais in the army as their leader,[3] a threat to his position.

Although both called each other 'toqan' (elder brother)[4] they were rivals not only due to their political ambition but also on religious grounds — Bairam being a Shia and Tardi Beg a Sunni.

Sukumar Ray rightly says :

"The historian of India can justify the execution of Tardi Beg because it led to authority of Bairam Khan, calmed all

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1 Khafi Khan, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Vol. I, p. 132, quoted in Z.U.Mulick, "The Eighteenth Century view of Akbar" in Iqtidar Alam Khan, ed., Akbar and his Age, p. 254.

2 Ghulam Hussain Tabatabai, "Siyar al Muta'akhkhirin", Vol. I, Lucknow, 1866, p. 169. quoted in Z.U.Mulick, "The Eighteenth century view of Akbar" in Iqtidar Alam Khan, ed., Akbar and his Age, p. 243.

3 Babur calls him "a choice spirit who began life as a dervish and ended as a distinguished general" S.M. Edwards, Babur Diarist and Despot, London, n.d. pp 83-85.

4 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 51; Abdul Qadir Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh., Vol. II, p. 7; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II, p. 943.

disaffection and established unity and discipline which was necessary for the restoration and consolidation of the Mughal kingdom in Hindustan..... the biographers of Bairam Khan cannot but regard it as a dark blot in his career".[1]

As *Vakil-us-Sultanat*, Bairam Khan's dealings with Mulla Pir Muhammad Sherwani, a learned person,[2] (talib-i-ilm) reveals his innate jealousy at the success of others and the way he manipulated circumstances to bring about the ouster of those whom he took a dislike for.

Bairam Khan was instrumental in Pir Muhammad being made his *Vakil* (agent) after he distinguished himself in the battle against Hemu.[3] He was loyal and sincere but Bairam Khan, under the influence of some envious men got suspicious of the Mulla's actions and without the latter having done anything which merited dismissal he flung off an honest man who had put his faith in him.[4] A trivial incident where the Khan-i-Khanan was not recognised by the Mulla's attendant and therefore not allowed to visit the ailing Pir Muhammad proved to be the cause of his ouster.[5] Since Akbar had handed over the whole business of administration to Bairam Khan he left the retribution of this undesirable deed to God, although personally he did not approve

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1 Sukumar Ray, Bairam Khan, p. 141.

2 Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, Eng. trans. pp. 342-343 gives a detailed account of Mulla's life.

3 Abul Fazl describes his services in the battle against Hemu, Akbarnama, Vol. II, pp. 49,70,71,72

4 Ibid., p. 131.

5 Abdul Qadir Badoani, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, pp. 20-22; Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, pp. 131-132; Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, p. 73.

of it. Bairam Khan alienated a sincere servant at the instigation of shortsighted sychophants.

The fact that after Bairam's downfall Pir Muhammad was honoured with the little of Khan[1] a standard and a drum and later confirmed as Governor of Malwa proves he did not deserve the treatment that he received from his patron who in alienating the Mulla brought about his own misfortune.

Although Bairam Khan involved himself in court politics to bring about the elimination of those who could become inconvenient for him, his ouster after four years proves that there were others in the court who plotted against him on account of his assuming dictatorial powers.

Maham Anagah, who was regarded as Akbar's prime confidante,[2] was an intriguing lady who by her dexterous diplomacy and resourcefulness, masterminded the downfall of Bairam Khan and assumed charge of affairs in the months that followed his eviction. As Bairam Khan's hold on Akbar increased day by day Maham Anagah along with some others resented it and grew more jealous and kept herself constantly busy behind the scene plotting against Bairam Khan.[3] Maham Anagah kept

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1 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 156; Abdul Qadir Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 33; and Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, p. 73, say he was given the title of Nasir-ul-Mulk and a Mansab of 5,000.

2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, pp. 149-150, Maham Anagah not only wielded great influence at the court but participated actively in running of the central government. Iqtidar Alam Khan, Political Biography of a Mughal noble, Munim Khan, Khan-i-Khanan., p. 60; Rekha Misra, Women in Mughal India, Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1967, p. 28.

3 Whenever the strife mongers gathered in open or secret assemblies they concocted false complaints against the Khan-i-Khanan and circulated rumours from camp to camp so that foe and friend alike heard them. Khafi Khan, Muntakbhab-ul-Lubab, Vol. I, pp. 135-136; vide Iqtidar Alam Khan, Akbar and his Age, p. 243.

instigating Akbar by narrating incidents to the emperor, indicating how his Prime Minister had monopolised all the powers of the state, including the control of the privy purse.[1]

Maham Anagah whose chief aim of taking part in the disturbed politics of the time was to advance the interests of her son Adham Khan was ultimately successful in freeing Akbar from the influence of Bairam Khan. The *Vakil-us-Sultanat* was forced to proceed on pilgrimage to Mecca while she, after having seized the property of Bairam Khan, pushed her advantages with such cleverness that traces of her ascendancy were soon visible in the tutelage of the emperor and in every department of civil and military administration.[2]

The seriousness of court intrigues in the Mughal political circles is also reflected in the friction between Shamsuddin Atka Khan and Maham Anagah at the former's appointment as the virtual head of the central government and subsequent appointment to the office of *Vakil.*[3]

Atka Khan's rise to the *Vikalat* and subsequent changes in the power circles was resented by Maham Anagah and her coterie (which included Munim Khan), who were the greatest sufferers.[4] An exchange of accusations and counter accusations which

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1 "At every opportunity they said to his Majesty words which might produce disfavour in his mind" (towards Bairam Khan), Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 241; R.P. Tripathi, "Mahan Angah and Akbar", J.I.H., Vol. I, 1921, pp. 27-44.

2 Count Noer, Kaiser Akbar, Vol. I, Eng. trans. A.S. Beveridge, entitled Emperor Akbar, Calcutta, 1890, p. 82.

3 Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 595 and Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 230 give Atka Khan's name in the list of Akbar's *Vakils*. Both Akbarnama and Ain-i-Akbari also mention that he supervised the central government prior to his appointment as *Vakil*, Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 231.

4 Muhammad Arif Qandhari, Tarikh-i-Akbari, p.100; Iqtidar Alam Khan, Political Biography of a Mughal Noble, Munim Khan, Khan-i-Khanan, p. 65.

continued unchecked for several months culminated in the hatred of Maham Anagah reaching a point where she could no longer tolerate the rising influence of Atka Khan.[1] She found enthusiastic supporters in Munim Khan and Shihabuddin Ahmad who instigated Adham Khan to murder the Prime Minister in May 1562 A.D.[2]

The Prime Ministership of the loyal and devoted Atka Khan that was cut short by the intrigues in Mughal court circles reveals the dangerousness of these liasons and the vulnerability of the highest office in the empire in such situations.

Another fact that emerges from the troubled politics of the period of Bairam Khan's regency as well as that of the so called 'Petticoat Government[3] (1560-62 A.D.) is the involvement of the emperor himself. His competence in using one of the groups to overthrow or control the other and in ultimately retaining the strings of government in his hands are clearly visible.

The evidence of prime ministers involving themselves in court politics as a result of personal jealousies and rivalries is also seen in Todar Mal's relationship with Khwaja Shah Mansur who was made *Wazir* in 1578 A.D., when the former held the position of Ashraf-i-*Diwan*. The execution of Khwaja Shah Mansur, a major architect of Akbar's financial reforms, casts a shadow over Akbar's reputation as a humane sovereign.

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1 "This hatred led to the formation of two groups in the court circles. Maham Anagah, Munim Khan,Shihabuddin Ahmad and Adham Khan, the more powerful and the less infuential circle of Atka Khan...." SAA Rizvi, Religious and Intellectual History of the Muslims in Akbar's Reign, with special reference to Abul Fazl, p. 177.

2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 278; Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 100.

3 V.A. Smith, Akbar the Great Mogul, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1917, p. 48.

Khwaja Shah Mansur, joined Mughal service in the initial years of Akbar's reign and after having served in various capacities was appointed *Wazir*,[1] where along with Todar Mal as *Ashraf-i-Diwan* and Muzaffar Khan as *Vakil* they introduced very significant administrative reforms. However Todar Mal had serious differences with Shah Mansur and always looked for an opportunity to humiliate him.

Todar Mal represented to Akbar that Shah Mansur who was expected to guard the finances honestly had adopted a very harsh attitude towards the servants of the empire in demanding arrears[2] and these payments had become the cause of dissensions in the army.[3] Accordingly Akbar who had implicit faith in Todar Mal removed Shah Mansur from office and put him under the surveillance of Shah Quli Mehram.[4] However he soon realised that this complaint was baseless and that the Khwaja was not at fault and ordered his release.[5]

Again, Todar Mal happened to be one of the persons blamed for the conspiracy against Khwaja Shah Mansur and through

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1 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, pp. 193-194; Nizamudddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 494. Abdul Qadir Badaoni, Muntakab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 240; Shahnawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, pp. 653-654; Afzal Hussain, 'Khwaja Shah Mansur : The Tragic Career of an Intellectual Finance Minister' in I.H. Siddiqui, ed., Essays in Intellectual Thought and Culture, Manohar, Delhi 2003, p.117.

2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, pp. 461-462.

3 Abdul Qadir Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p.295; Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, pp. 539-40.

4 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, pp. 461-462; Abdul Qadir Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut -Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 295. Nizamuddin Ahmad Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, pp. 539-40, Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II , p. 753.

5 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 480; Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 298. Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 542; Infact the Khwaja with his expertise in financial management and limited experience of politics and war only executed Akbar's programme of financial and administrative centralization without considering its political consequences. Douglas E. Streusand, The Formation of the Mughal Empire, p. 168.

forged letters managed to establish that the Khwaja had been in league with Mirza Hakim[1] during the Bengal-Bihar rebellion of 1580-81 A.D. Akbar received many incriminating letters that hinted at the Khwaja expressing loyalty to Mirza Hakim.[2] Although Akbar initially ignored them as forgeries, he was provided with evidence about the Khwaja planning to join Mirza Hakim's army.[3] Akbar acted on this promptly and ordered his execution which was carried out in February 1581 A.D.[4] Later Akbar was convinced that the letters used as evidence against Khwaja Shah Mansur had indeed been forged by Karamullah brother of Shahbaz Khan.[5] Most contemporary authorities do not say who advised him, but Todar Mal is held responsible for being party to the conspiracy.[6] However, Akbar often expressed regret at having ordered the execution of Shah Mansur.

Another political conspiracy that reveals the political intrigues involving the highest official in the state comes to light in the concluding years of Akbar's reign. Mirza Aziz Koka who was appointed *Vakil* of the empire in 1595 A.D. and held the position

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1 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 502; Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, pp. 545-546; Badoani, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 300; A.L. Srivastava, Akbar the Great, Vol. I, pp. 261-263.

2 Douglas E. Streusand, The Formation of the Mughal Empire, p. 169.

3 Afzal Hussain, "Khwaja Shah Mansur : The Tragic Career of an Intellectual Finance Minister"' in I.H. Siddiqui, ed., Essays in Intellectual thought and Culture, Vol. I, Manohar, Delhi, 2003, p.120.

4 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 503; Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 547; Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, pp.300-301; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, pp. 655-659.

5 Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 553; Abdul Qadir Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, pp. 294-295; The Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p 658 says Karamullah was the tool of Todar Mal but the Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh, denies that Todar Mal had any hand in the intrigues against Khwaja Shah Mansur; Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 547, also admits that Khwaja Mansur was wrongly convicted.

6 Shahnawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II, pp. 8, 754.

till the end of Akbar's reign was at the head of the conspiracy to place Khusrau on the throne overriding the claims of his father Jahangir. Although Akbar had been successful in raising a loyal bureaucracy by initiating reforms in the administrative set up, he could not provide any solution to the problem of succession to the imperial throne. This lead the nobility to support the claims of rival princes at the time of emperor's death. Since the Prime Minister was not sure whether he would be able to maintain his prominent position in the event of Jahangir's accession, he put forth the claims of his son-in-law[1] who was a fine gentleman and loved by all. Therefore it appears that it was public good combined with private motives that prompted Mirza Aziz Koka along with some supporters to further the prospects of his succession.[2]

When it became known that the emperor's illness was serious, the *Khan-i-Azam* Aziz Koka decided to take matters in his hands. Since both Aziz Koka and Man Singh were ill disposed towards Salim, they submitted the proposal for the succession of sultan Khusrau to the ailing Akbar, who even in the state of agony did not agree to the proposal. Aziz Koka even seized Jahangir when he came to see his ailing father, but he was warned of the plot and thereby saved. Had Aziz Koka taken Akbar into confidence about Salim's supercession in favour of Khusrau, there was a remote possibility of the plan being successful. Since the influential nobles at the court were split into two factions, it

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1 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 1211; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 327; Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, The Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, Eng. trans. Z.A. Desai, Part-I, 1993, p. 59.

2 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 327; A.L. Srivastava, Akbar The Great, Vol. I, p. 453.

became impossible to carry out the plan in secrecy. Although Aziz Koka tried to win over the nobles by saying "the character of the exalted prince is well known and the emperor's feelings towards him are notorious for he by no means wishes him to be his successor. We must all agree to place sultan Khusrau on the throne".[1] However, the Chagtai tradition of the eldest son succeeding the father was so deeply imbedded in the nobility that it thwarted any such proposal, even though it came from Akbar's premier noble.

The Emperor, who died soon after, must have been pained to hear of the conspiracy hatched by his trusted official Mirza Aziz Koka. Such events also reveal the insecurity among the senior nobility (which included the Prime Minister) about their future which forced them to take crucial decisions on issues like imperial succession on their own.[2] Jahangir, indeed showed lack of vindictiveness when he honoured most of his commitments and gave a general order that ranks and jagirs held by his father's servants were to remain unchanged.[3]

The involvement of prime ministers in court politics for personal gains is no where more clear than in the times of Jahangir where both Itmad-ud-Daulah and Asaf Khan[4] were involved in several intrigues and conspiracies concerning the imperial family. They are known to have keenly collaborated in the

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1 Asad Beg, Wikaya-I-Asad Beg, in Elliot and Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 170.

2 Afzal Hussain, Nobility under the Akbar and Jahangir: A Study of Family Groups, p. 186.

3 Jahangir, Tazuk-i-Jahangiri, , Eng. trans. Vol. I, p. 14; Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, The Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin , Part I, p. 60

4 Itmad-ud-Daulah was Jahangiri's Chief Diwan / Wazir from 1611 A.D. to 1622 A.D., Asaf Khan also his right hand man, was made *Vakil* in 1626 A.D. and continued to hold the office in the first fifteen years of Shah Jahan's reign.

domestic issue involving the royal family which came to be known as the 'Khusrau problem'. Since Khusrau had created trouble for Jahangir between 1603-1605 A.D. by emerging as a rival claimant to the throne and had rebelled against his father in 1606 A.D.[1] he did become a victim of the power struggle during Itmad-ud-Daulah's tenure as *Diwan.*[2] He was imprisoned[3] with the intention of preventing him from paying allegiance at the durbar. Throughout this time Itmad-ud-Daulah and Asaf Khan tried their best to convince Jahangir to let Asaf Khan have Khusrau under his surveillance so that he could be removed from any possibility of any imperial favour. They succeeded in doing so when Jahangir was supposedly under the influence of liquor[4] and ordered his transfer to Asaf Khan's care.

Although Itmad-ud-Daulah was later also responsible for the eventual freedom of Khusrau from imprisonment (as he convinced Nur Jahan and Asaf Khan to make peace with Khusrau) he worked hard to prevent any stable reinstatement of Khusrau's position in the imperial durbar until his death in 1621 A.D.[5] Irrespective of what Jahangir had in mind for his son, Khusrau's chances of renewing his position at the court were remote owing

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1 Brij Bhushan Lal Srivastava, "The Fate of Khusrau", J.I.H., 1964, pp. 479-492. Jahangir described it as the unhappy affair of Khusrau, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p. 252.

2 This coincided with what is referred to by some scholars as the rise of the Nur Jahan Janta, Beni Prasad History of Jahangir, p. 160. but it is refuted by later researchers like Rekha Misra, Women in Mughal India, (1526-1748), p. 34; Chandra Pant, Nur Jahan and her family, pp. 50-62; K.S. Lal, The Mughal Harem, pp. 79-82.

3 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p. 261. but he was provided all comforts and convenience of clothing and eating as well as a small number of servants.

4 William Foster, ed., The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul, 1615-1619, as narrated in his Journal and Correspondence, Hakluyt Society, 1899, Vol.II, p. 282.

5 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p. 228.

to the ill intentioned manipulations of Itmad-ud-Daulah and Asaf Khan.

Although contemporary sources point to the direct responsibility of Shah Jahan in the killing of Khusrau,[1] the compliance of Itmad-ud-Daulah and Asaf Khan cannot be ignored. Their manipulations behind the scene made them accomplices in the crime. Khusrau's elimination gave them a sense of relief and also provided them a chance to promote the cause of a protégé. Asaf Khan and Nur Jahan were from this point of time to be led to opposite camps.[2]

The involvement of prime ministers in political intrigues is reflected in the circumstances that led Mahabat Khan, a trusted noble of Jahangir, to rebel against the emperor as a result of courtly infighting around him and take charge of affairs of the empire for a 'hundred days'.[3]

Mahabat Khan had invited the enemity of Nurjahan by criticising Jahangir for entrusting too much power to a woman.[4] but his enemity with Asaf Khan is also well known,[5] for Mahabat

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1 Muhammad Salih Kambu, Amal-i-Salih, , Vol. I, p.137, vide B.P. Saksena. History of Shah Jahan of Dihli, p. 35; for contemporary evidence of Khusrau's murder The English Factories in India, 1622-23; Beni Prasad, History of Jahangir, pp. 336-340.

2 While Nurjahan began promoting the prospects of Shahriyar, her son-in-law, Asaf Khan got busy in cultivating a political environment that could lead to Khurram's eventual succession.

3 Mahabat Khan's sovereignty over Jahangir's imperial camp lasted from March to the beginning of August 1626 A.D. a little over hundred days. Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VI, pp. 419, 429.

4 "The world is surprised that such a wise and sensible emperor as Jahangir should permit a woman to have so great an influence over him", Intikhab-i-Jahangir Shahi', extracts of a work written by a companion of Jahangir, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 452.

5 Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 420; Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p.271.

Khan had overpowered Khurram (the future Shah Jahan), Asaf Khan's son-in-law and protégé and virtually had him exiled to the Deccan. Moreover, Mahabat Khan's role in crushing his rebellion was also enough reason for Asaf Khan to plot against him.[1]

Asaf Khan, backed by Nur Jahan levelled false charges against Mahabat Khan and convinced the emperor of his ill intentions[2] who ordered him to proceed to Bengal. Asaf Khan and Nur Jahan were successful in separating Mahabat Khan from his protégé, Parvez , thereby undermining the young prince's chances of succession to the throne. Mahabat Khan saw through Asaf Khan's plan and wrote to Nur Jahan that as long as Asaf Khan remained at court he would not obey her summons.[3] Later when Mahabat Khan decided to appear before Jahangir, complying with his orders, and sent his son-in-law Khwaja Barkhurdar as his representative, the emperor ill treated him.[4] Mahabat Khan could not tolerate this insult. Since he was aware of the absence of any well-wisher at the court who could convince

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1 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p. 279; Manucci, Storia do Mogor, Vol. I, p. 164, mentions that Asaf Khan and Nur Jahan even toyed with the idea of assassinating him. Banarsi Prasad Saksena, History of Shah Jahan of Dihli,p. 53; Chandra Pant, Nur Jahan and her Family, p. 69.

2 Van Den Broecke, A Contemporary Dutch Chronicle of Mughal India, trans. and ed., Brij Narain and Sri Ram Sharma, Calcutta, 1957, p. 96; J.S. Hoyland trans. S.N. Bannerjee annotated The Empire of the Great Mogul, A trans. of De Laet's Description of India and Fragment of Indian History, Idarah-i-Adabiyat-i-Delli, 1975, p. 222.

3 Francis Gladwin, History of Jahangir, pp. 106-107.

4 Khwaja Barkhurdar was the son of Khwaja Umar, Naqshbandi and had offended Jahangir by marrying Mahabat Khan's daughter without royal consent. Muhammad Hadi, Tatimma-i-Wakiat-i-Jahangiri, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, pp. 396-397; Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 420; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part I, p. 18.

the emperor of his innocence, he forcibly met Jahangir, and informed him of his fears.

> *"I have assured myself that escape from the , malice and implacable hatred of Asaf Khan is impossible and that I shall be put to death in shame and ignominy .... If I deserve death or punishment, give the order that I may suffer it in your presence".*[1]

Mahabat Khan also took Jahangir in his custody openly claiming that he had done so to escape Asaf Khan's hostility. Asaf Khan and Nurjahan were overpowered in the battle they fought against Mahabat Khan to rescue the emperor.[2] Asaf Khan, Jahangir's influential brother-in-law and advisor who was the cause of this political adversity fled when he was certain that he could not offer effective resistance to Mahabat Khan.

However the rivalry between them ended with Mahabat forgiving Asaf Khan[3] who surrendered on the promise that his life would be spared and promised to treat Mahabat Khan like a natural brother. Jahangir too showed full sympathy with Asaf Khan and offered him the office of *Vakil-us-Sultanat* empowering him to take charge of all revenue and political affairs.[4] It is surprising how Jahangir could overlook such a conduct from his powerful brother-in-law. The last years of Jahangir's reign were full of turmoil and his *Vakil* was in no small measure responsible

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1 Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, Eng. trans.Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 420.

2 Ibid., p. 425; Afzal Hussain, Nobility under Akbar and Jahangir, A study of Family Groups, p. 177.

3 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara,, Vol. II, Part I, p. 19.

4 Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson,Vol. VI, p.421; Beni Prasad, History of Jahangir, p. 357.

for the misery caused to the emperor. Although both Asaf Khan and Mahabat Khan were well rewarded by Shah Jahan on his succession, Mahabat Khan's fear of Asaf Khan remained.[1] The apprehensions nurtured by Mahabat Khan were not totally unfounded as later events revealed. Although Mahabat Khan and his family received promotions they were not given major positions in the court owing to Asaf Khan's influence.[2]

Soon after Jahangir's death, Asaf Khan, the *Vakil-us-Sultanat* got involved in another political struggle to prevent his over ambitious sister, Nur Jahan, who was toying with the idea of retaining power in her hands as she had done in Jahangir's life time.[3] Asaf Khan came out in the open against her shrewd manipulations of controlling the succession to the throne by putting her son-in-law Shahriyar on the throne and had her shifted from the palace.[4] The ambitious minister informed Shah Jahan, then in the Deccan, about Jahangir's death. He put Dawar Baksh, son of Khusrau, on the throne temporarily while he

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1 When Shah Jahan went to Ajmer to pray at the dargah of Muinuddin Chisti, Mahabat Khan asked him to swear by the Koran that his offences had been forgiven because "Asaf Khan with whom you have a very close relationship would come and order my execution as he is thirsty of my blood" Shaikh Farid Bhakkari' Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, Part II, p. 10; Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badshahnama, Vol. I, p. 181-182. Lahori refers to the visit of Shahjahan to Ajmer but does not refer to the incident, Afzal Hussain, Nobility under Akbar and Jahangir, A Study of Family Groups, p. 180.

2 Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badshahnama, Vol. I, p. 255, cited in Afzal Hussain, The Mughal Nobility under Akbar and Jahangir, p. 181.

3 Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badshanama, Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 5; Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, p.11, Banarsi Prasad Saksena, History of Shah Jahan of Dihli, p. 57; J.F. Richards, The Mughal Empire, p. 117; G.S. Cheema, The Forgotten Mughals : A History of the Later Emperors of the House of Babur, 1707-1857, Manohar, 2002, p. 19.

4 Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badshahnama, Eng.trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 6; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, , Vol. I, p. 290.

went about mustering support for Shah Jahan.[1] Shahryar, whose only strength lay in his scheming and powerful mother-in-law, made an attempt for the throne but was imprisoned and blinded by Asaf Khan.[2] Surprisingly, Nur Jahan could not deceive her brother inspite of the influence she still enjoyed.[3] Shahryar's defeat was followed by the imprisonment of Dawar Baksh and death sentences to Daniyal's sons, Hoshang and Tahmurs, by the orders of the Emperor designate Shah Jahan,[4] who acquired the throne due to the shrewdness with which his well wisher Asaf Khan manipulated the state of affairs in his favour. He was rewarded by Shah Jahan with great lavishness on his succession to the throne.[5]

Shah Jahan's reign was by and large free from any apparent groupism. The cohesiveness between the crown and the nobility as well as within the nobility itself was the result of mutual interdependence on each other. Shah Jahan adopted a policy of compromise with his nobility which is reflected by the absence of

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1 It was a strategic move to gain time and check bids by other claimants. Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, Eng.trans.Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 436; Manucci, Storia do Mogor, Vol. I, p. 172; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 290; B.P. Saksena, History of Shah Jahan of Dihli, p. 57; Chandra Pant, Nur Jahan and her Family, p. 76.

2 Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson,, Vol. VI, p. 437, Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 291; Manucci, Storia do Mogor, Vol. I, p. 172.

3 Beni Prasad remarks if Nur Jahan had been free to act, she might have prolonged the affair but even she could have hardly succeeded against her brother in the end, History of Jahangir, p. 401.

4 Although Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, pp. 269-97 and Qazvini, Padshahnama, pp. 115-117, assert that all the princes were put to death by the order of Shah Jahan but in the account of some European travellers, we come across a chance story about the survival of Dawar Baksh who escaped by substituting another man in his place, B.P. Saksena, History of Shah Jahan of Dihli, p. 62.

5 Asaf Khan was promoted to the mansab of 8,000 zat and 8,000 sawar du aspa sih aspa and the premier rank in the Empire, B.P. Saksena, History of Shah Jahan of Dihli, p. 64.

vindictiveness of the crown towards them.[1] This led the bulk of the nobility to rally around the Mughal emperor and serve him with sincerity. The consciousness of racial and religious identities did exist but were subservient to imperial interests.

We find a reflection of the same attitude in the emperor's dealings with his *Diwans*. He was always approachable and friendly towards them and even visited their homes[2] at times. This resulted in lesser participation of these grandees in political intrigues and conspiracies.

An incident during the term of Islam Khan Mashadi, the *Diwan-i-kul* from 1639-1645 A.D. proves the smoothness with which administrative decisions were made. When Khan Dauran Nazrat Jang, the governor of Deccan was killed, Shah Jahan asked Islam Khan, who he thought would be the right person to replace him. Islam Khan, in fact, suggested his own name as he was convinced that Shah Jahan was keen to appoint Sadullah Khan as his *Diwan*. Apprehending a situation where he would be superceded, he displayed good judgement and wisdom whereby he was handed over the responsibility of the Deccan and Sadullah Khan confirmed as *Wazir*.[3] This was in extraordinary contrast to the situation in the early years of Akbar's reign where fear of

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1 Jujhar Singh Bundela was pardoned and restored to his original mansab of 4000 / 4000 in 1629 A.D. Lahori; Badshanama, Vol. I, pp.254-255; Salih, Amal-i-Salih, Vol. I, p. 330, cited in Firdoz Anwar, Nobility under the Mughals, 1628-1658, Manohar 2001, p. 44.

2 When Afzal Khan requested him to visit his haveli, the Emperor agreed readily. Lahori, Badshanama, Vol. I, pp. 495-496. When Asaf Khan could not attend court on account of illness the Emperor went to meet him personally Lahori, Badshanama, Vol. I, p. 595. cited in Firdoz Anwar, Nobility Under the Mughals 1628-58, p. 45. When Sadullah Khan was confined to bed, Shahajahan honoured him by visiting him. Syed Anees Jahan, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II, p. 643.

3 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 695.

losing power and influence led Maham Anagah and Munim Khan to conspire to bring about the murder of Atka Khan. It also reflects the maturity which some members of the senior nobility had come to possess.

The tenure of Sadullah Khan as *Diwan-i-kul* of Shah Jahan 1645-1656 A.D., however witnessed an enemical relationship between the renowned *Wazir* and the emperor's favorite son Dara Shukoh[1]. Infact foreign travellers like Bernier[2] and Manucci[3] have even charged Dara Shukoh of poisoning Sadullah Khan. Although contemporary historians like Abdul Hamid Lahori and Muhammad Waris do not make mention of their mutual apathy towards each other, there are references of Dara Shukoh suspecting Sadullah Khan of using his position to deprive the prince of more productive parganas[4] and even rejecting a request for a cash grant of rupees ten lakhs from the imperial treasury.[5] 'Ideologically they were incompatible for Dara Shukoh was known to be very liberal and broadminded as opposed to the narrow outlook of the Sunni minister [6] Sadullah Khan. Politically also, it was alleged, that Sadullah Khan favoured Sultan Shuja as Shah

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1 Shabbir Ahmad Siddiqui, 'Relations between Dara Shukoh and Sadullah Khan', P.I.H.C., 1986, p. 273.

2 Francois Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire, Eng.trans. Archibald Constable, S.Chand and Co., pp. 23-24.

3 Manucci, Storia do Mogor, Vol. I, p. 225.

4 Shabbir Ahmad Siddiqui, Relations between Dara Shukoh and Sadullah Khan', P.I.H.C., 1986, p. 273.

5 Aurangzeb, Ruqqat-i-Alamgiri,, Eng. trans. p. 54.

6 Muhammad Kazim, Alamgirnama, Eng. trans. Elliot &Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 179; Francois Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire, pp. 323-324; Manucci, Storia Do Mogor, Vol. I, pp. 214-215; B.P. Saksena, History of Shah Jahan of Dihli, p. 322; Jigar Muhammad, Prince Dara Shukoh's Writings on Sufism and Comparative study of Religion – A Study of Majma-ul-Bahrain in S.M. Waseem, ed., Development of Persian Historiography in India from second half of seventeenth century to first half of eighteenth century, Kanishka Publishers, New Delhi, 2003, p. 121.

Jahan's successor to the throne. Shah Jahan must have been unhappy at the strained relations between the two. In the Ruqqat-i-Alamgiri there are references of his disapproving Dara's conduct and advising him from time to time.[1] However, one must keep in mind that this disapproval of Shah Jahan for Dara comes from a source very openly hostile to Dara Shukoh.

Claims of existence of hostile camps at the court, one headed by Sadullah Khan and the other by Dara Shukoh appear to be an exaggeration for as so long as Shah Jahan was in command of the situation, no groupism existed at the court and in the event of emperor's illness Dara was so much in command of affairs that no one could disregard his authority.[2] However, the existence of a tussle between the *Wazir* and Dara Shukoh cannot be completely ruled out. If anecdotes recorded by Khafi Khan and those reproduced in Ruqqat -i-Alamgiri are to be believed it was the prince who was guilty most of the times. Conscious of the fact that Sadullah Khan was not likely to support him in the event of a contest for the throne, he nurtured feelings of hostility towards the *Wazir*, who otherwise enjoyed a flawless reputation in court

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1 "To quarrel with the good and the virtuous is to show enemity to oneself — It is good to win the hearts of these men.Able and intelligent servants are the source of increase of property and good name to their masters", Aurangzeb, Ruqqat-i-Alamgiri, pp. 54-55; Even Mirza Muhammad Kazim's Alamgirnama, the official history of Aurangzeb's time calls Dara 'be Shukoh' (undignified). However as an official historian he could only extol him (Aurangzeb) and belittle his enemies. Jigar Muhammad, "Prince Dara Shukoh's Writings on Sufism and comparative study of Religion — A Study of Majma-ul-Bahrain" in S.M. Waseem, ed., Development of historiography from Second half of seventeenth Century to first half of eighteenth century, p. 8.

2 Shabbir Ahmad Khan, "Relations between Dara Shukoh and Sadullah Khan" P.I.H.C., 1986, p. 275.

circles and was equally respected by the emperor.[1] Fortunately for Dara Shukoh, the death of Sadullah Khan in 1556 A.D. removed his most formidable opponent from the court and enabled him to temporarily establish his sway at the court during Shah Jahan's illness.

The last year of Shah Jahan's reign culminated into a crisis in the form of a war of succession amongst his ambitious sons. Shah Jahan's illness that precipitated the crisis paralysed the entire governmental machinery.[2] Since each prince was keen to create his own support in the struggle, formation of cliques within court circles became unavoidable. The relationship between the prince and the concerned noble as well as what could be offered to them by way of reward, were considerations that determined their decisions.

Mughal *Wazirs* were also known to have openly supported individual members of the royal family. Sadullah Khan, who unfortunately died before the war of succession ensued, was favourably inclined towards Shah Shuja, whereas Mir Jumla (Muazzam Khan) was in league with Aurangzeb. It is surprising that the entire nobility including the Prime Minister abandoned the cause of the legitimate monarch and joined the victorious son. No one bothered to endanger his own position by fighting on behalf of the dispossessed sovereign Everyone thronged to the side of the usurper.[3] The trend of prime ministers by and large

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1 Inayat Khan, Shah Jahanama, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p.118; Shahnawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part II, p. 643; Aurangzeb, Ruqqat-i-Alamgiri, p. 32.

2 Syed Anees Jahan, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 77.

3 Francois Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire , p.124.

refraining from indulging in political intrigues (barring the succession years immediately after Shah Jahan's death) continued even after Aurangzeb's accession as one does not come across any blatant involvement of the nobility in intrigues, because of the conscious effort on the part of the emperor to keep them in good humour. In view of the circumstances in which he had acquired the throne and the cooperation he required from them to prove his capability over his father[1] (through distinguished military successes) Aurangzeb avoided dissensions of any kind. As regards his relationship with his *Wazirs* there was an absence of any confrontation. They were always aware of their duties and constraints and fortunate to have enjoyed royal favour.

Muazzam Khan served the cause of Aurangzeb with utmost loyalty. He never gave Shah Jahan any reason to regret the confidence reposed in him.[2] As Aurangzeb's *Wazir*, Muazzam Khan's personal ambitions never came into clash with his master, whose implicit confidence in his ever supportive Prime Minister is proof of his loyalty and worth. However, on account of his suspicious nature Aurangzeb, perhaps intentionally, kept Muazzam Khan busy in the north-eastern campaigns. Although he continued to enjoy the status of *Wazir*, he was not in a position to influence or control politics at the court.

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1 Aurangzeb, Ruqqat-i-Alamgiri, pp. 211-212, 216-214; Aurangzeb's letter to Shah Jahan, Adab-I-Alamgiri, ff. 289a 93 b, vide Athar Ali, The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb, p. 97.

2 Jagdish Naryan Sarkar, The Life of Mir Jumla – The General of Aurangzeb, p. 354; contemporary European writers have accused him of treachery as he deserted two out of three of his masters. Francois Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire, pp. 169-170; Mannucci, Storia do Mogor, Vol. II, pp.102, 189.

Aurangzeb's desire to centralize power in his hands against the tendency of the *Wazir* to assert his position over that of the sovereign led his second *Wazir*, Jafar Khan, to remain subservient and contribute to an atmosphere free of conspiracies and manipulations. Moreover, Jafar Khan had a short tenure of six years which did not let major conspiracies to surface during his *Wazir*ship. However, the situation changed during the last two decades of Aurangzeb's reign that coincided with the *Wazir*ship of Asad Khan. Aurangzeb was very fond of his *Wazir*,[1] who besides his loyalty to the emperor was a popular *Wazir* but the long drawn war in the Deccan without any decisive outcome led to a political crisis which was sure to test the endurance of the nobility which became critical of Aurangzeb's strategy. Asad Khan's suggestion to Aurangzeb of leaving the Deccan after substantial successes[2] was not met with any positive response by the emperor.[3]

. In a situation where the majority of the nobility was anxious to leave the Deccan and the emperor unwilling to yield to pressure, suspicions and conspiracies became inevitable. The problems emerging from the failure of the jagirdari system undermined the loyalty of the old nobility that began harbouring designs of carving their own, spheres of influence. Aurangzeb's

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1 "There is not, nor will there (ever) be any Wazir better than Asad Khan", quoted in Jadunath Sarkar, History of Aurangzib, Vol. V, p. 262.

2 Bijapur had been captured in 1686 A.D. Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 332; Syed Anees Jahan, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, pp. 333-338, Golconda was captured in 1687 A.D.; Shambhaji killed in 1689 A.D. Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 337.

3 Inayatullah Khan, Akham-i-Alamgiri, ff. 25b – 26a, vide Athar Ali, Mughal Nobility Under Aurangzeb,, p. 107.

Wazir Asad Khan and his son Zulfikar Khan, the Mir Bakshi, were suspected of harbouring such ambitions.[1]

Towards the beginning of the eighteenth century two groups emerged that were to dominate court politics for the next few years. The first led by Asad Khan, the *Wazir-ul-Mumalik,* who enjoyed the longest tenure of thirty one years and his son Zulfikar Khan, who had been appointed Mir Bakshi in 1702 A.D., believed in appeasing the Marathas and saving Mughal authority in the Deccan through a settlement with them.[2] There are references of Zulfikar Khan forwarding a proposal from the Maratha chief Rajaram for settlement to Aurangzeb only to be rejected by the emperor and Mir Bakshi writing conciliatory notes to Maratha sardars from time to time.[3]

The second group, consisting of Ghaziuddin Firuz Jang[4] and his sons Chin Qulich Khan and Hamid Khan Bahadur adopted a rigid and unbending attitude towards the Marathas. This, coupled with the intense competition for possession of good jagirs further aggravated the situation and hampered unity in imperial policies with regard to military enterprise. Ghaziuddin is said to have harboured designs of becoming independent after Aurangzeb and the emperor had begun suspecting his credibility

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1 Satish Chandra, Medieval India from Sultanat to the Mughals, Part II; The Mughal Empire, 1526-1748, Haranand Publications, New Delhi, 1999, pp. 353-354.

2 Satish Chandra, Parties and Politics of the Mughal Court, O.U.P. New Delhi, 2002, p. 46; Athar Ali, The Mughal Nobility Under Aurangzeb, p. 110.

3 Mannucci, Storia do Mogor, claims that some of his friends had a secret agreement with the Marathas and avoided crushing them when he was governor of Carnatik in 1705 A.D., Vol. IV, pp. 228-229; Saqi Mustaid Khan, Maasir-i-Alamgiri, p. 511, quoted in Athar Ali, The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb,, p. 110; Jadunath Sarkar, History of Aurangzib, , Vol. I, p. 101.

4 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, pp. 587-92.

and on inspecting his artillery in 1707 A.D. remarked he has all that he should have or rather should not have. [1]

The distrust and groupism within the Mughal nobility over imperial policies in the Deccan and the resulting sense of rivalry was bound to usher in the serious political crisis that the Mughal empire faced in 1707 A.D. This also had a forceful impact on events that followed Aurangzeb's death.[2]

The foregoing facts prove that political rivalries existed throughout the period under review and the involvement of prime ministers in intrigues and conspiracies was always there, although the underlying motive and nature of involvement varied from time to time. Whether to crush all possible challenge to their authority in an attempt to become *Wazir* with unlimited authority, like Bairam Khan, or to support claims of succession to ensure their authority in the event of the emperor's death as tenures of Nizamuddin Khalifa, Mirza Aziz Koka and Asaf Khan prove, their participation was always present.

There appears to be an absence of any attempt to dominate the emperor Aurangzeb's *Wazirs*. This was to a great extent the result of Aurangzeb's resolve to centralise all authority in himself. But the expansion of the empire, coupled with the prolonged inconclusiveness of the Deccan campaign led to formation of cliques and political rivalries, which though by no means unusual, were to assume such dangerous proportions in the post

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1 Satish Chandra, Medieval India, from Sultanat to the Mughals, Part II, The Mughal Empire, p. 456.

2 Satish Chandra, Parties and Politics of the Mughal Court, p. 49.

Aurangzeb period that the office of *Wazir* became a hot seat of power and influence.

Although there is no authentic evidence that Nadir Shah received an invitation to invade India from any section of the nobility, the faction led by Nizam-ul-Mulk and Saadat Khan must have been responsible for inviting Nadir Shah.[1] With the nobility involved in factional and self seeking politics and no one to counter the rising power of the Marathas, the possibility of such an invitation, hoping it would lead to destruction of Maratha power and clear the field for them, seems quite possible. It is almost reminiscent of the manner in which Mughal rule was ushered in India, through similar invitations from the Afghan nobility to Babur in the first quarter of the sixteenth century.

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1 Satish Chandra, Parties and Politics of the Mughal Court, p. 285.

Chapter - VI

CONTRIBUTION IN SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND LITERARY SPHERES

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in India were marked by a heightened cultural activity as had not been witnessed in the past. Although much of this was due to the élan of the immensely gifted line of Mughal emperors who were known for their grandeur and opulence, a very substantial contribution came from encouragement and patronage provided to cultural and literary activities by the nobility as well.

The nobles were not just great military leaders and administrators but a highly cultured class that possessed tremendous creative ability. Since a very major part of the state income was distributed among the nobles, they had an enormous amount of wealth at their disposal, which apart from being spent in maintaining an ostentatious and pompous lifestyle[1] was equally devoted to productive and useful work like contribution to charitable and religious endowments,[2] patronizing scholarship and promoting various arts and crafts.

Mughal prime ministers by virtue of their position as leaders of the nobility contributed towards enrichment of socio-cultural life of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by financing *madarsas*, encouraging scholars, musicians and astrologers who looked upto them

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1 Tapan Ray Chaudhuri and Irfan Habib, ed., The Cambridge Economic History of India, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1982, Vol. I, p. 468.

2 I.P. Gupta, Urban Glimpses of Mughal India, Agra, The Imperial Capital in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Discovery, Delhi, 1986, p. 76.

for patronage. Besides indulging in reckless expenditure on luxury and vain display of wealth, there is substantial evidence of their indulging in creative works of public welfare like building mosques, bridges and bazaars thereby providing employment to a large number of people directly or indirectly.

Since a fairly long period of rule as well as peaceful and settled conditions of government were essential for pursuance of such endeavours, Mughal *Wazirs* under Babur and Humayun are not known to have made any major contribution towards the development of socio-cultural environment. However, Nizamuddin Khalifa, Babur's *Wazir* enjoyed the title of 'Hakim' meaning a wise person, philosopher or a doctor of medicine.[1] Amir Khalifa was accomplished particularly in matters of medical knowledge and prescribed medicines to Babur and Humayun.[2] Humayun's *Wazir*, Hindu Beg, an important minister under Babur as well is known to have built a mosque at Sambhal, one hundred and forty kilometres east of Delhi in 1526 A.D. The Sambhal mosque was the largest one constructed in the Delhi region since Timur's destruction of the city in 1398 A.D. It is the first extant Mughal building in India.[3]

Culturally the most fruitful time in Mughal history was the reign of Akbar for its enriching accomplishments as well as the prospects it opened up. His prime ministers who were men of great ability, besides performing their military and administrative obligations to the state, also sustained their love for grandeur and indulged in cultural pursuits.

Bairam Khan, Akbar's Vakil-us-Sultanat from 1556-1560 A.D. (a Turk by race and a Persian by culture) was greatly skilled in poetry and found time to compose verses despite his brief yet eventful tenure as

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1 Thomas Patrick Hughes, Dictionary of Islam, p. 160.
2 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Eng. trans., Vol. II, Part I, p. 222.
3 Catherine B. Asher, Architecture of Mughal India, C.U.P. , 1995, p. 28.

Babur's Prime Minister.[1] He composed brilliant odes and made insertions in the poems of masters. He collected these and gave them the name of '*dakhliya*'.[2] He could compose both in Turki and Persian The following panegyric by him is famous:

> *"Muhammad of Arabia who is the luster of the face of both the worlds.*
>
> *May dust cover the head of one who does not deem himself to be the dust of his door."*[3]

He completed a *Diwan* containing verses in both these languages. A ghazal composed by him has been translated into urdu by a scholar Mohammad Akhtar Muslim. The original Farsi ghazal is included in his *Diwan*.[4] Infact his wife also had a poetical vein and wrote under the pen name of Makhfi (concealed).[5]

Bairam Khan was essentially a man of remarkable qualities. His genuine interest in learning made him patronize many poets. Badaoni writes :

> *"Learned men came from all parts of the world to visit him and departed happy in the possession of gifts bestowed by his hand as open as the ocean and his court as high as the sky was the resort of the lords of learning ...."*[6]

Some of the poets who enjoyed Bairam Khan's generosity were Hashim Qandhari and Hijaz Khan Badaoni.

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1 Sukumar Ray, Bairam Khan, p. 222.
2 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Eng. trans., Vol. I, p. 376.
3 Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakhirat-ul-Khawanin, Eng. trans. Z.A. Desai, Part I, Adarah-i-Adabiyat-i-Delli, p. 14. However the verse is also ascribed to his compainion Hilali Astarabadi by Sam Mirza Safawi – a contemporary prince.
4 Diwan-i-Bairam Khan, Institute of Central and West Asian Studies, 1971, p. 25.
5 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 371.
6 Badaoni, Muntakahab-ut-Tawarikh, Eng. trans. Vol. III, p. 190.

غزل

دل کو ہرگز نہ بے لگام کیا　　درد و غم نے نہ دل کو رام کیا
دشت و صحرا کی سمت بھی نہ گیا　　نہ کبھی دشت میں قیام کیا
روئے جاناں کو چشمِ دل بخشی　　خون دل آنسوؤں کے نام کیا
چشم غمگیں کو دیکھ کر پرنم　　خون سے لبریز دل کا جام کیا
آتش دل سے شمع کی مانند　　شغل دل سوزش مدام کیا
چشم خونبار میں چبھوئے خار　　دل کے داغوں کو بھی نہ عام کیا

زیادتی اور کمی کا ہر احساس
بیرمؔ اپنے لئے حرام کیا

Urdu translation of Bairam Khan's ghazal by Mohammad Akhtar Muslim

Whenever he was impressed by a couplet or a song read out to him he would offer a handsome reward.[1] To Hashim Qandhari, whose ghazal he published as his own by rearranging the lines differently, he paid a lakh of tankahs.[2] Although Badaoni has charged Bairam Khan with the blame that he acquired a ghazal from Hashim, Bairam was a poet of repute who had penned two *Diwan*s, one in Turki and the other in Persian. These were popular even in the later days of Akbar.[3] The ghazal in question is remarkable as it depicts the state of affairs Bairam Khan was passing through. It mentioned that forty years of his service had been discarded and he was denied a meeting with Akbar and was running for his life. Who could have written such a ghazal but the one who was experiencing the misery reflected in it. [4]

Great works were composed by scholars who enjoyed Bairam Khan's patronage. It was under his encouragement that Naziri Samarqandi took up the writing of Shahnama-i-Humayun.[5] Mohammad Arif Qandhari, the author of 'Tarikh-i-Akbari', was also once in the service of Bairam Khan.

Bairam Khan was known for his humour and ready wit. Once when sitting in Humayun's presence he became inattentive, but impressed the emperor on being questioned, by saying :

"My king I have heard that when 'waiting upon princes on should have heed to his eyes, and when serving

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1 To Hijaz Khan Badaoni, he gave a lakh of tankahs for a 'qasida' in which the 'maqta' was dedicated to him and made him supervisor of government of Sirhind, Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 37.

2 Ibid., p. 36

3 Ibid., Vol. III, p. 266. His verses are on every tongue. Abdul Baqi Nihawandi also says he had seen his diwan in the library of Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan - it had two thousand shairs, Maasir-i-Rahimi, Vol. II, p. 61, vide Sukumar Ray, Bairam Khan, p. 240.

4 Munshi Debi Prasad Kayastha, Khan-i-Khanan Nama, Institute of Central and West Asian Studies, Univerity of Karachi, 1990, p. 10

5 Pran Nath Chopra, Life and Letters under the Mughals,, Asha Janak Pub., New Delhi, 1976, p. 325.

dervishes one should pay heed to his heart and in the presence of the erudite should guard his tongue and so I was thinking that as all three personalities were collected in your Majesty which of them I should observe."[1]

Bairam Khan is known to have started the practices of *'Kornish'* and *'Taslim'* in the Mughal court during the days of Akbar.[2] These were usual presentation ceremonies at the Mughal court. Another contribution of Bairam Khan was the introduction of *'Sarparda'*, an enclosure round the tent better known as *'Qanat'*. These were in frequent use in India as well as in Iran.[3]

Bairam Khan who enjoyed the reputation of being a military dictator par excellence and an unyielding administrator was not bereft of human virtues. The following Hukms[4] of Bairam Khan prove that he was full of feelings of charity and kindheartedness. A Hukm of Bairam Khan dated 7th Septemper, 1558 A.D. addressed to officials of Allahabad (Prayag) directs them to deliver possession of one thousnad five hundred bighas of land situated in qasba Prayag to Sayyid Abdul Qadir as Muafi grant and orders them not to press him for a renewed sanad every year. On top of the Hukm there was a 'Tughra' of Akbar followed by the name of Bairam Khan. There were seals of Akbar and Bairam Khan as well. Another Hukm of Bairam Khan of

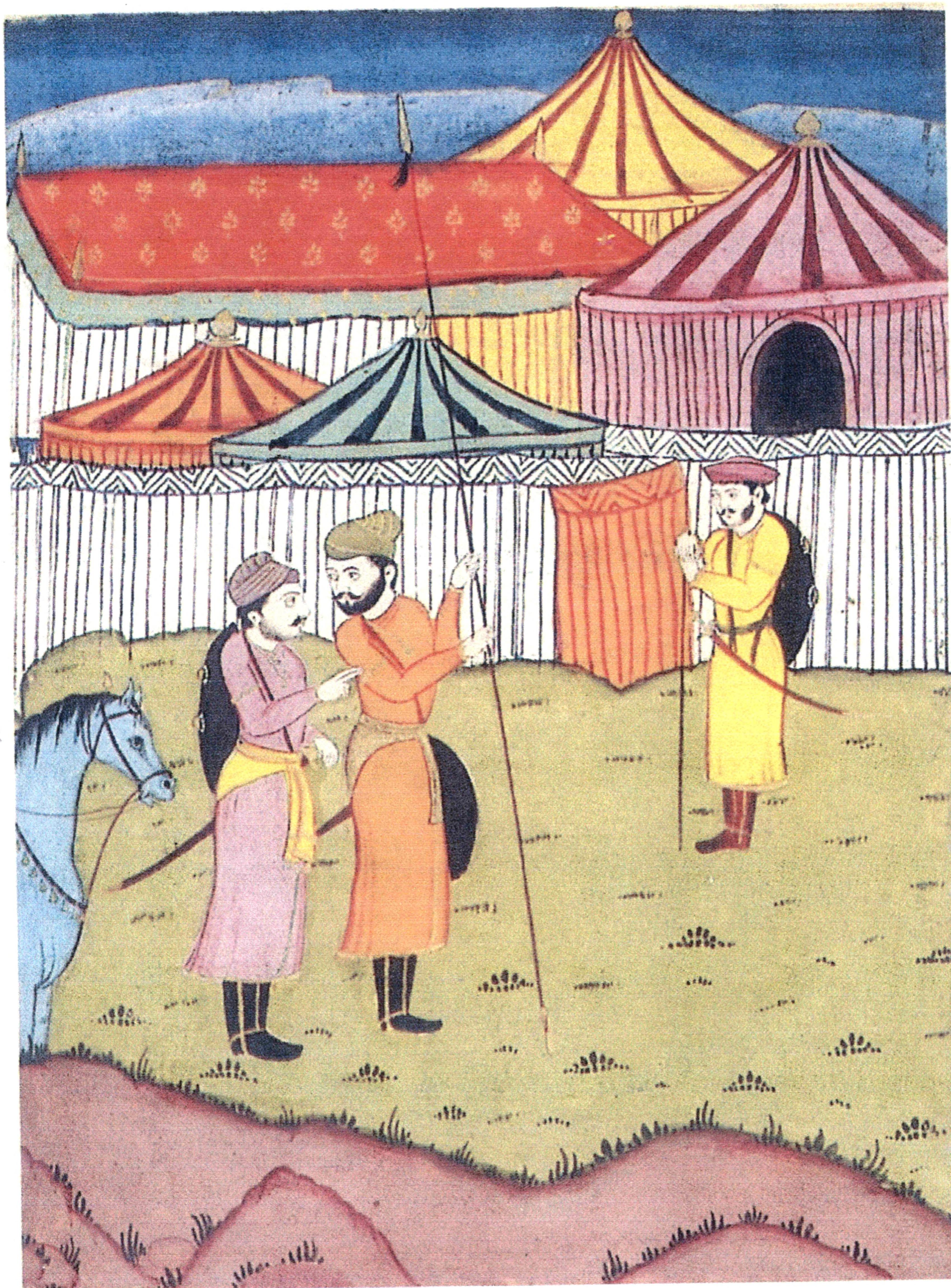
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1 Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. I, p. 377; Munshi Debi Prasad Kayastha, Khan-i-Khanan Nama, p. 14.

2 Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 299, Abdul Baqi Nihawandi also agrees that Bairam Khan played an active part in instituting the procedures of Kornish and Taslim. 'Kornish' consisted of placing the palm of right hand upon the forehead and head was bent forward. Taslim consisted of placing the back of right hand on the ground and then raising it gradually until the saluter stood erect when he puts the palm of the hand upon his head.

3 Sukumar Ray, Bairam Khan, p. 232.

4 'Hukm' was an edict of either the queen mother or the Royal consort, but it was a privileged order also of Khan-I-Khanan during the reign of Akbar as is borne out by the orders of Bairam Khan and Munim Khan who had the honour of issuing hukms, though they could, as a rule, issue Parwanches only.



9. Bairam Khan talking to Tardī Beg Khān infront of colourful tents and *sarapardas*. *Sarapardas* were first introduced by Bairam Khan (*Akbar-nama* 26203, Dept of Oriental Manuscripts British Library).

October/November 1558 A.D. grants two hundred bighas of land to a saint Shaikh Gadabanda for maintenance. It bears Bairam Khan's seal.[1]

Mughal emperors, with the exception of Aurangzeb, and their nobility were keen patrons of music which was valued as a source of aesthetic fulfillment and spiritual bliss under Akbar. Bairam Khan set the tone for promotion of music by taking into his service Ramdas, a gifted musician from Lucknow, who had served in the court of Salim Shah and whom Badaoni describes as 'a second Miyan Tansen'. This man who was Khan-i-Khanan's intimate companion often brought tears into Bairam's eyes by the melody of his voice. [2] Bairam Khan once rewarded him with one lakh tankahs even though his treasury was empty at that time.

Although Akbar is applauded for his natural inclination towards religious toleration, Bairam Khan's role in shaping his ideology during formative years of his adolescence cannot be ignored.[3] Bairam Khan's having been labelled a staunch Shia has been questioned by some historians.[4] However, his action of placing Shaikh Gadai, a Shia, at the head of a vast Sunni majority is hard to defend. Akbar's disapproval of it by enlisting himself as a disciple of Shaikh Ghaus, the most respected Shia saint of the times and paying him a visit at Gwalior also proves the point. Whereas eighteenth century chroniclers like Khafi Khan and Shah Nawaz Khan write of his sectarian bias (ta'a

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1 Indian Historical Records Commission, XII, p. 161., S.A. I. Tarmizi, Mughal Documents,, 1989, p. 154, 155.

2 Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 37.

3 Iqtidar Alam Khan, "Akbar's Personality traits and world outlook - A Critical Reappraisal", in Irfan Habib,ed., Akbar and His India, O.U.P., New Delhi, 1997, p. 81.

4 Iqtidar Alam Khan believes that there is contemporary evidence to prove that he was above sectrain bias and did not attach much significance to the Shia-Sunni rift. Some of the Turani nobles, most of whom must have been Sunnis, continued to support Bairam Khan throughout his Regency. "The Mughal Court Politics during Bairam Khan's Regency", Medieval India - A Miscellancy, Vol. I, Aligarh, 1969, p. 35.

ssub), Badaoni has labelled Bairam Khan as a Tafzeeli. [1] Akbar's first Prime Minister does deserve some credit for a secular outlook adopted by his master in his later years.

Maham Anagah, Akbar's nurse and virtual Prime Minister immediately after he disengaged himself from Bairam Khan's overbearing influence, was a cultured lady who considered it a great service to impart education and spent a lot of money for this cause. She established a Madrasa at Delhi which was attached to a mosque called Khair-ul-Manzil[2] in 1561 A.D. In this way the absence of state sponsored education system was to a some extent compensated by the establishment of these institutions by members of the ruling elite.

Maham Anagah also displayed style and élan as is revealed by her fondness for arranging banquets. In 1561 A.D., she arranged a magnificent banquet on the occasion of her son's marriage.[3] The same year she arranged another great entertainment event in which many ladies participated.[4] Maham Anagah also took active interest in arranging negotiations for matrimonial alliances. She played an active role in furthering marriage negotiations of Bairam Khan and Salima Sultan Begum.[5] She also negotiated the marriage of her elder son Adham Khan to the daughter of Baqi Begum.[6]

From the beginning Akbar's fascination for architecture was echoed by the nobility who made a substantial contribution in giving it

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1 Tafzeeli is a sect in Islam among the Sunnis who believe that Hazrat Ali was the fourth in position as Khalifa but prefer him as first in virtues and qualities. Sukumar Ray, Bairam Khan, p. 234.

2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Eng. trans. , Vol. II, p. 313; Yusuf Hussain, "Educational System in Medieval India", Islamic Culture, Vol. 30, 1936, p. 116; Glimpses of Medieval Indian Culture, p. 84; Satish Chandra, Medieval India, Part II, Mughal Empire, calls it Khair-ul-Majlis. Haranand Publication, New Delhi, 1999, p. 433.

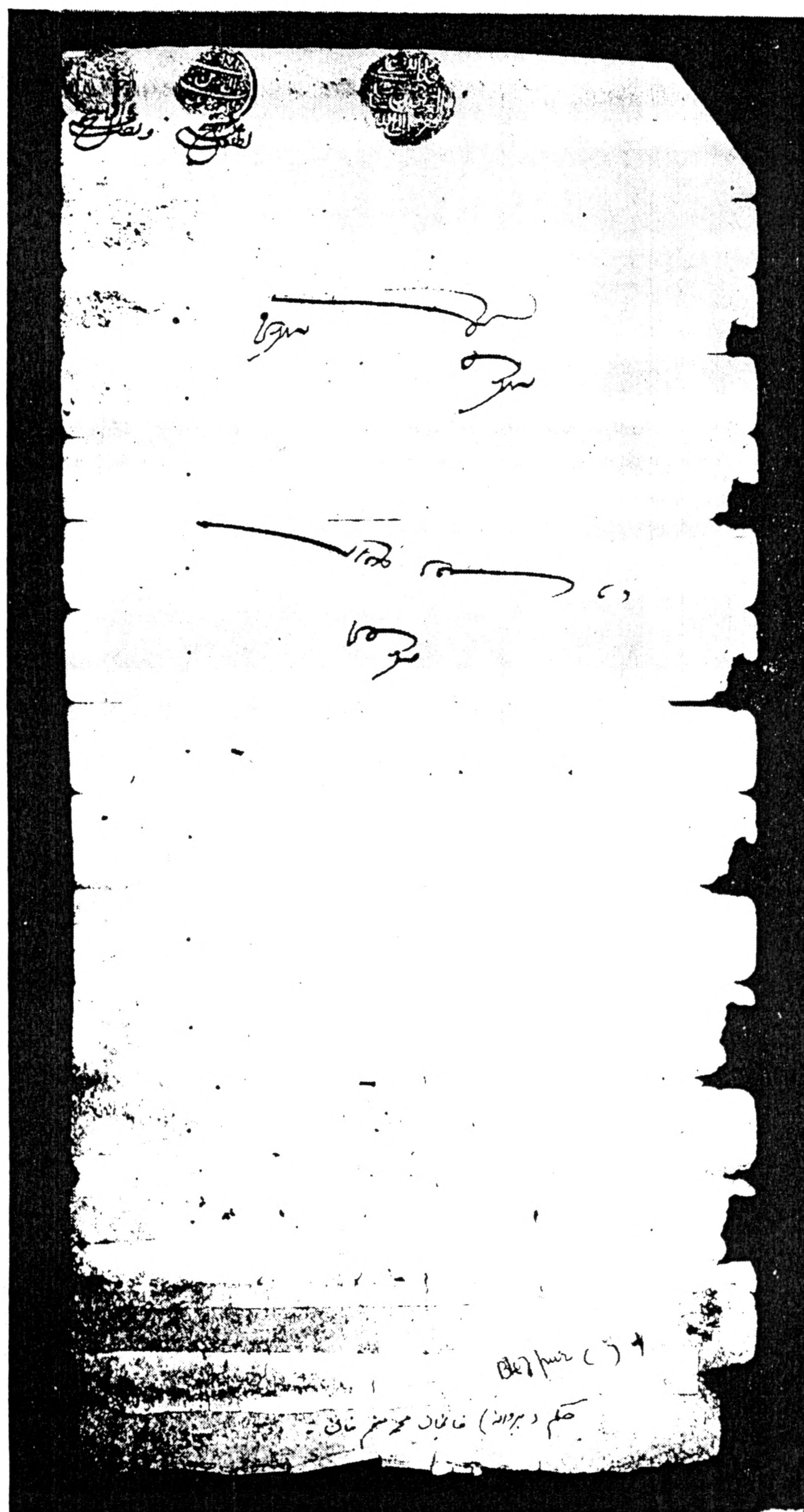
3 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, pp. 204-205.

4 Ibid., p. 221; Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, pp. 250-251.

5 Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tabaqat-i-Akbari, Vol. II, pp. 204-205.

6 Ibid, p. 251.

Hasb ul-Hukm issued by Mun'im Khan Khan-i Khanan in Safar 974 H/August-September 1566 A.D.



Reverse of *Hasb ul-Hukm* issued by Mun'im Khan Khan-i Khanan in Safar 974 H/August-September 1566 A.D.

A HASB UL-HUKM ISSUED BY MUN'IM KHAN.

A *hasb-ul-hukm* issued by Mun'im Khan dated, Safar 975 H/August-September 1566 A.D.

On the direction of Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar Badshah Ghazi,

Order by Khan-i-Khanan Muhammad Mun'im Bahadur.

Hakims, diwans, amils and other officials of pargana Bhojpur of sarkar Agra may know that twenty bighas of land under cultivation and fifty bighas of fallow land in the village Sarwarpur belonging to tappa Maipur, a division of the above pargana, is granted to Qazi Alam as madad *mash.* This land may be given in the possession of the aforesaid qazi from the beginning of the *kharif* (autumn harvest) of Pars Yil, so that he may acquire the revenue from that land and use it for his maintenance. He and his cultivators should not be asked to pay *mal-o-jihat* (land revenue) and *sair-ikharajat* and all the other demands of the *diwani* (the revenue department) such as *qunlagha* (gift made by a zamindar while paying visit to a hakim), *peshkash* (cash offering), sa'iri (payment for the staff of the revenue collector), *jaribana* (measurement fee), *zabitana* (assessment fee), *muhrana* (payment for seal), *sad-doi-i-qanungoi* (share of the muqaddam), *takrar-i-zara'at*, *harj kharch* (miscellenous charges), *adwab* (cesses), *jiziah* (poll tax on non-Muslims), *muhtarifa* (taxes on artisans), *laughana* (fine for disobeidience) etc. No one should be allowed to interfere with the lands of the aforementioned. It is their (the officials) responsibility. The instructions in this regard should be considered by them as binding.

Seal
Muhammad Mun'im, entitled
Khan-i-Khanan

Written in the month of Safar 974 H.

an ever broadening base in terms of construction and patronage. Munim Khan,Khan-i-Khanan who enjoyed two tenures as Akbar's Vakil-us-Sultanat and was also governor of Jaunpur was a talented person. Most of Munim Khan's creative work was in the city of Jaunpur which was extensively remodelled by him after its destruction during the time of the Lodhis.[1] Being a deeply religious man, he constructed a number of mosques in the city. A khanqah and a few shops were attached to the mosque built in memory of Shah Shaikhu, a well known saint. The fact that the income from these shops was spent on the maintenance of the students studying in the madarsa of the mosque proves his commitment to the welfare of the needy.[2] Munim Khan also constructed a mosque named Masjid-ud-Da'wat. This mosque was situated on the bank of the river Gomti. There is evidence to suggest that certain mosques like 'nawab Mohsin Khan ki masjid' and an idgah were constructed by persons who enjoyed his patronage.

The most famous of Munim Khan's architectural contributions is the bridge over the Gomti.[3] According to the Persian history of Jaunpur, it was constructed by Munim Khan in response to a discourse by Akbar in which he, hearing a widow complain about the lack of ferry service across the Gomti proclaimed that it is better to provide public works than religious edifices. [4]

Munim Khan was generous as far as giving grants for religious causes were concerned. There is a *Hasb-ul-Hukm* issued by Munim Khan in August 1566 A.D. bearing his seal, ordering twenty bighas of

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1 Catherine B.Asher, Architecture of Mughal India, p. 87.

2 Distt. Gazetteers of United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Vol. XXVIII, 1908, p. 24; Tarikh-i-Jaunpur, ff. 46 a, 47 b, cited in Iqtidar Alam Khan's Political Biography of a Mughal Noble, Munim Khan Khan-i-Khanan, p. 122.

3 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I p. 291; Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 45; Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 334.

4 A. Fuhrer, The Sharqi Architecture of Jaunpur, Archeological Survey of India,, Vol. XI, Varanasi, p. 20.

land under cultivation and fifty bighas of fallow land in village Sarwarpur[1] be given to Qazi Alam as madad mash so that revenue of this land may be acquired for his maintenance and he should be free from paying *'mal-i-jihat'* (land revenue) and *sair ikhrajat*[2] and all the demands of the *Diwani* (the revenue department)

Keeping in time with the lavish and pompous lifestyle of the Mughal nobility Munim Khan was also known to have been fond of arranging parties and banquets. Despite certain flaws in his character Munim Khan, a Sunni, was seemingly above sectarian prejudices (ta'assub) which is proved by the fact that Ali Quli Khan who was known for his Shia beliefs was amongst Munim Khan's closest friends.[3] Therefore, it is not unreasonable to imagine that the contribution of these early counsellors of the emperor to his natural inclination towards religious tolerance was substantial.

Atka Khan enjoyed a very short but significant tenure as *Vakil.* A very loyal and devoted servant of the Mughals he served the emperor very selflessly. He possessed poetic genius. Badaoni remarks, although his dignity is too great to be described as a poet, he composed the following verses :

"My little tear set not thy foot forth
from the house of my eye
for well born children have the house but seldom"

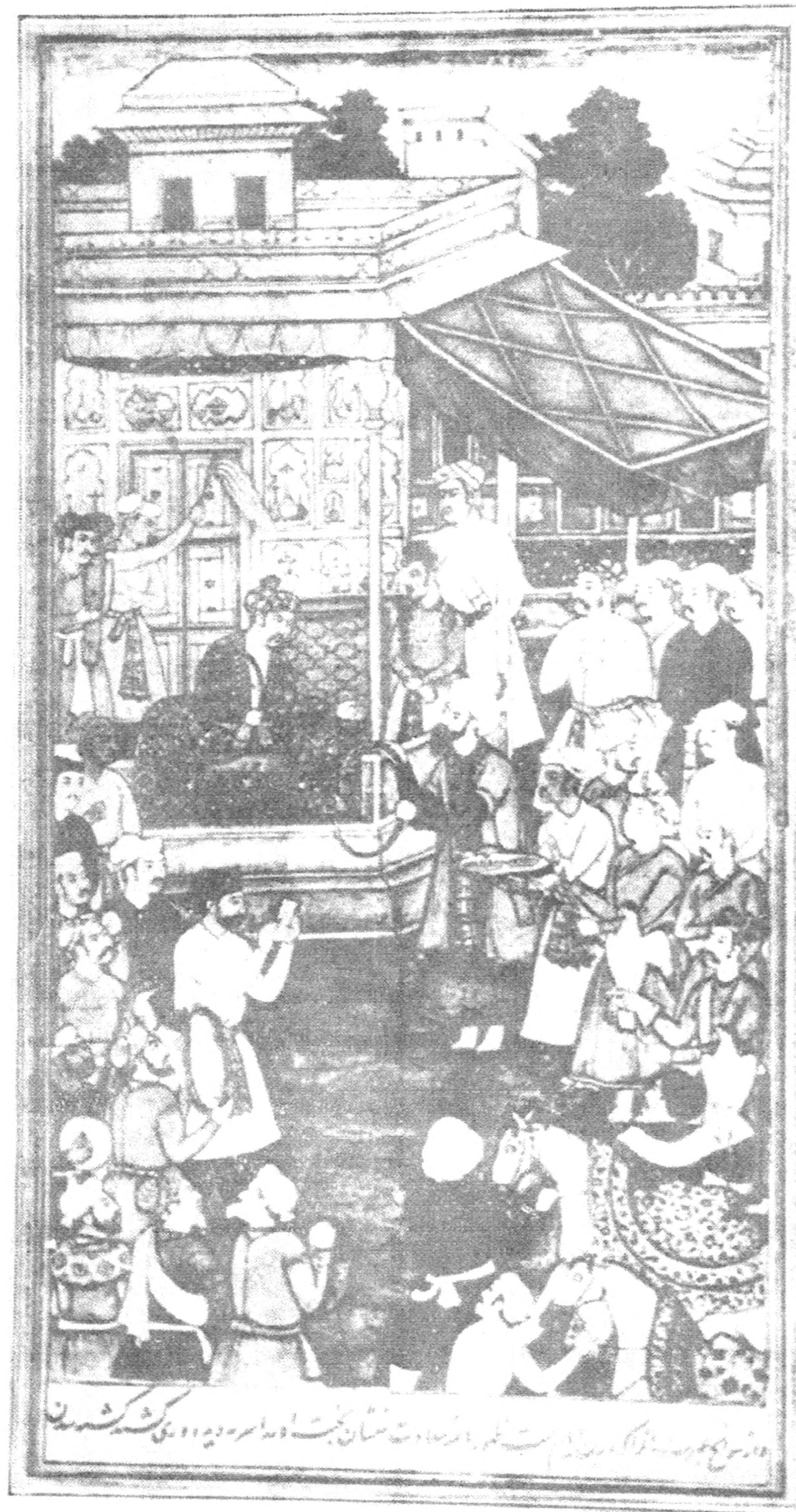
Another verse by Atka Khan is quoted by Badaoni:

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1 No village of this name is traceable now. Probably some time in the eighteenth or ninteenth century the village came to be known as Shaikhupur named after the Farooqi zamindars and land holders living there. Iqtidar Alam Khan, Political Biography of a Mughal Noble Munim Khan, Khan-i-Khanan, p. 124.

2 In the revenue accounts given in the manuals and elsewhere, the Jama is equally divided into mal-i-jihat and sair-o-jihat. The former comprising land revenue and the latter other taxes. Irfan Habib, Agrarian System of Mughal India,, p. 243.

3 Iqtidar Alam Khan, 'Akbar's Personality, Traits and World Outlook – A Critical Reappraisal' in Irfan Habib, ed., Akbar and His India, p. 81.



Akbar receiving Mirza Sulaiman's envoy at a banquet given by Munim Khan in January 1561

If the full moon in her glory
should boast over the sun of the face.
She will at least sink down
from the turquoise sky invented.[1]

Muzaffar Khan Turbati, Akbar's *Diwan* and later Vakil-us-Sultanat not only possessed a sound knowledge of financial affairs but was fond of style and grandeur. He built a beautiful mansion for himself in Agra, which received a lot of acclaim on account of its beauty and decoration.[2] He was fond of entertaining in style and Akbar is said to have honoured him in 1572 A.D. by visiting his haveli.[3] Muzaffar Khan is known to have built a Jami Masjid at Agra. The masjid, now in ruins, is still known as Nawab Muzaffar ki Masjid or Kali Masjid.[4]

Raja Todar Mal was one of the most remarkable Hindu officers in Akbar's service and the most striking instance of upward mobility of deserving individuals in their professional careers during the reign of Akbar. A consummate scholar of Persian, Todar Mal is credited with the persian translation of the 'Bhagwat Purana'. Several scholars produced works of great social and cultural significance under his patronage. The sixteenth century saw a general decline in standards of Hindu practices and customs. A scholar named Nilkantha produced a voluminous work on judicial procedures, auspicious time for marriages, religious ceremonies, on law and medicine and named it 'Todar Nanda'. Another work entitled 'Todar Prakash' by a distinguished scholar Raghunandan Misra was also written under his patronage.[5]

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1 Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. III, p. 309.
2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. II, p. 531.
3 Ibid, p. 531; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part I, p. 363.
4 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara. Vol. II, Part I, p. 364. The word Jama Masjid here actually means public mosque as the Jama Masjid in Agra was built in Shahjahan's time in honour of his daughter Jahanara.
5 A.L. Srivastava, Akbar the Great, Vol. III, p. 127.

Todar Mal is known to have been the patron of a poet called Alam who wrote 'Madhavanala Kamakandala' which has been ignored by scholars as an important source material because of its lack of historical bearing, but it does reflect historical events and socio-cultural developments of Akbar's time.[1] It is dedicated to Akbar and Todar Mal and was completed in 1582-83 A.D.

Todar Mal was predisposed towards charity. It was at his suggestion that daily distribution of charities at the doors of the royal palace was started. He believed and even suggested to other members of the nobility that amirs should take care of the empty handed atleast once a week.[2] At his recommendation, thousands of prisoners of war were released and provided with employment in government offices thereby performing a great social obligation. They were designated as chelas (desciples) of the king.[3] His concern for the helpless and the needy has been emphasised by later historians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including Tabatabai.[4]

Varanasi had been an important centre of learning from ancient times but had suffered from neglect at the hands of Sultans of Delhi and many scholars consequently migrated to the Deccan. [5] Todar Mal and his son Govardhan Das are reported to have helped Akbar in the efforts to restore it to its previous place as the centre of ancient learning and culture.[6] Abul Fazl remarked "Crowds of people come to it from the most distant parts for the purpose of instruction to which they apply

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1 Euginia Vanina, "Madhavanala Kandala" by Alam : A Hindi poem of Akbar's epoch", I.H.R., Vol. XX, p. 67.

2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 158.

3 Sujan Rai Bhandari, Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh, p. 408, quoted by Z.U. Malik, "The Eighteenth Century View of Akbar, The Legend of Todar Mal" in Iqtidar Alam Khan, ed., Akbar and his Age, New Delhi, 1999, p. 255.

4 Ibid., p. 255.

5 District Gazetteer of Banaras, pp. 190-191.

6 Manoj K. Srivastava, "The Social, Political and Religious Conditions in Varanasi during Akbar's Rule", P.I.H.C., 1991, p. 273.

themselves with the most devoted assiduity"[1]. Foreign travellers like Bernier also noted the importance of Benaras as a great seat of learning and called it the "Athens of India."[2]

A major cultural development in India during the Mughal age was the dissemination of Persian language throughout the empire. Though it had been the language of administration, earlier it had essentially been used by the ruling elite. Todar Mal's greatest contribution towards socio-cultural development was the ordinance issued by him making the knowledge of Persian compulsory for all servants of the empire. Todar Mal had the farsightedness to comprehend the binding effects of a common language. Till now the non-muslims had not shown keenness in learning Persian, which led to their practical exclusion from imperial transactions. Todar Mal induced his co-religionists to take up the study of the language through a very convincing propaganda. By doing this the minister was responsible for initiating a process of social fusion and cultural integration that is characteristic of Akbar's reign. Scholars believe that Todar Mal's ordinance making the knowledge of Persian compulsory led to the development of a new literary medium in the form of Urdu which came to be called Hindawi.[3]

Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan, son of Bairam Khan who was appointed *Vakil-us-Sultanet* by Akbar in 1590 A.D. was a great scholar, unequalled in respect of literary and cultural accomplishments.[4] He was a scholar of many languages. Abul Fazl writes that Abdur Rahim was a verstatile man who composed in Persian, Arabic, Sanskrit and

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1 Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 158.
2 Francois Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire, pp. 334-335.
3 Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 371, Urdu a hybrid Indo-Persian language was originally a language of military camps. The term Urdu is derived from the Turki word Ordu meaning military camp but it rapidly evolved into a distinct language using Persian script, Hindi syntax and a predominantly Persian and Arabic vocabulary mixed with a few Indian words.
4 Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 62.

Hindi.[1] The entire period appears deeply permeated with the spirit of poetry as a result of the unparalleled recognition it got from men like Abdur Rahim, who despite his constant employment in administrative affairs, found time to indulge in writing verses and collected a large *Diwan* of his poems.

Abdur Rahim held assemblies that were attended by learned men and poets. Many Persian poets such as Rasmi Qalandhari and Kausari remarked that in that age there was no such good purchaser of words as the Khan-i-Khanan.[2] Poets like Jamal ud din Muhammad Urfi (1556-1591 A.D.), the most famous and popular poet of his century, received handsome rewards from him for his poetic talents. It is said that Abdur Rahim used to give him so much money that he did not have to knock at any other person's door. [3]

Abdur Rahim got a poet Naziri of Nishapur weighed in gold.[4] Once Naziri desired to see a heap of one lakh silver coins. The Khan-i-Khanan arranged the money and sent it to him as a reward. Mulla Shaida, another renowned poet who migrated to Delhi was also patronized by Abdur Rahim. Some other poets who found a patron in Abdur Rahim were Shakibi of Isfahan who wrote elegant verse: [5]

"Oh God ! Send me from heaven a market for my wares,
I am selling my heart for a sight of my love; send me a buyer"

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1 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 62; Munshi Debi Prasad Kayastha, Khan-i-Khanan Nama, p. 51.

2 Maasir-i-Rahimi by Muhammad Abdul Baqi Nihawandi includes accounts of all those scholars and poets who flourished under the Khan's patronage.

3 Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakhirat-ul-Khawanin, Part I, p. 44. Urfi had attached himself to Abdur Rahim after the death of his former patron Hakim Abul Fath. His diwan consists of seventy six qasidas, two hundred and seventy ghazals and seven hundred qilas and qaurtrains. It was compiled in 1598 A.D.

4 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara Vol. I, p. 62; Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. III, p. 508.

5 Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 334; Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. III, p. 351; Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakhirat-ul-Khawanin, p. 27.

Another poet by the name of Urfi of Shiraz who was initially attached to Shaikh Faizi, served Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan and made great progress. However on account self admiration he lost his patron's favour.

Abdur Rahim was one of the most celebrated poets of Hindi in Akbar's court and one of the foremost in the whole country.[1] His command over the bhasha was not less than that of Tulsidas and is often called 'Poorna Kavi'. His verses in fine and simple words were very appealing and always carried a message. Infact no history of Hindi poetry can be completed without reference to the contribution of his verses.[2] His well known works are 'Rahim Dohawali', 'Barvai Nayika Bhed', 'Shringar Sorath', 'Rahim Ratnavali' etc. Of all his compositions his Dohavali is the most popular. He is said to have written seven hundred Dohas.[3] Sant Tulsidas writer of 'Ram Charit Manas' was also patronized by the Khan-i-Khanan. Tulsi Das's Ramayan was written in Barvai couplet which was an innovation of Rahim.

Besides his knowledge of Hindi, Abdur Rahim also used a local dialect 'Braj'[4] spoken in the neighbourhood of Agra as a means of expression of his ideas[5] and is said to have read out poems to Akbar in this language.[6] Abdur Rahim's efforts to produce a synthesis of bhakti

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1 Pt. Saryu Aggarwal, Akbari Darbar Ke Hindi Kavi, pp. 164-173; Ram Chandra Shukla, Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas, pp. 216-220.

2 Hazari Prasad Dwivedi, Hindi Sahitya Aur Uska Udhbhav aur Vikas, p. 125, places him in the class of Amir Khusrau.

3 C.R. Naik, Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan and his Litrary Circle, p. 244.

4 Most of the lyrics sung in the vocal art music of the period were composed in Braj. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, Indo Aryans and Hindi, Calcutta, 1960, p. 200. He says if any Indo Aryan language could be labeled as a badshahi boli in North India it was certainly Braj Bhakha (bhasha).

5 H.K. Sherwani, Cultural Trends in Medieval India,, p. 100.

6 Francoise 'Nalini' Delvoye, "The Image of Akbar as a Patron of Music in Indo-Persian and Vernacular Sources" in Irfan Habib, ed., Akbar and His India, p. 211.

poetry with Persian ideas of life and human relations led to Persian and Hindi literary conventions influencing each other to a great extent.[1]

It is rather surprising that the liberal minded Khan-i-Khanan who was alive to the devotional charm of Hindi verse came under the influence of Khwaja Baqibillah, the head of the Naqshbandi order that initiated the Islamic reaction against Akbar's heresy.[2]

The scholar courtier Khan-i-Khanan possessed a grand and rich library.[3] Although we do not know the exact number of volumes he possessed, but the fact that it required a staff of ninety calligraphers, guilders, book binders, painters, cutters and illuminators to undertake the work speaks for itself.[4] There is a reference of Mulla Muhammad Amin of Kashan who was superintendent of this library drawing a salary of four thousand rupees per month. Two illustrated manuscripts from the Khan-i-Khanan's library are known to us – one is the 'Khamsa' of Amir Khusrau (preserved at the Staas Bibliothec, Berlin) and the other manuscript is the 'Ramayana' (preserved at Freer Gallery of Art, Washington) which contains 130 paintings.[5] From the comments in the handwriting of Abdur Rahim, on the fly leaf of the manuscript of Ramayana, it appears that in 1598-99 A.D. Mulla Shakibi Imami was incharge of the illustration work at his library. Abdur Rahim's atelier was part of the establishment of his library and was organised on lines resembling those of the imperial studio. Jahangir refers to the valuable

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1 Satish Chandra, Medieval India from Sultanat to the Mughals, Part II, Mughal Empire, 1526-1748, p. 444.

2 Aziz Ahmad, Studies in Islamic Culture, O.U.P., New Delhi, 2000. p. 182.

3 S.A.Z. Nadvi, "Libraries during the Muslim Rule in India," Islamic Culture, October 1945, pp. 18, 39.

4 Stephen P. Blake, Shahjahanabad, The Sovereign City in Mughal India, 1639-1739, p. 134; Goetz, Indian Miniatures in the German Museums and Private Collections , Eastern Art, Vol. II, 1930.

5 S.P. Verma, "Painters under the Khan-i-Khanan" Q.R.H.S, Vol.XV, 1980-81, p. 37; S.P. Verma, Mughal Painters and their Work, O.U.P., New Delhi, 1994, p. 10.

offering of an illustrated manuscript of 'Yusuf and Zulaikha' made to him by the Khan-i-Khanan.[1]

Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan, who mastered Persian and Turkish was acclaimed for his ability at translation. He translated Babur's memoris written originally in Turkish into Persian.[2] Out of the several translations of Babur's memoirs the one done by Abdur Rahim is the most complete. Akbar applauded the Khan-i-Khanan for it[3] and ordered the court painters to illuminate the Khan-i-Khanan's manuscript.[4] The Khan-i-Khanan also had the expertise of translating court documents from Persian to Hindi at sight. He was unsurpassed in 'insha' (diplomatic correspondence) and once drafted a letter of introduction for Akbar's ambassador to the court of Abdullah Khan Uzbeg, ruler of Khurasan that was highly acclaimed at the Uzbeg court.[5]

Abdur Rahim had a fondness for architecture and his interest in this medium of artistic expression was aimed at turning "Hindustan into Iran"[6] When Lahore assumed importance and virtually served as the Mughal capital between 1584-98 A.D., the Khan-i-Khanan constructed a number of buildings, sarais and shelters for the poor and needy. Abdul Baqi Nihawandi wrote, "when weary travellers put up in

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1 The manuscript was prepared by Mulla Mir Ali in a beautiful binding and was worth one thousand muhrs. Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I. p. 168.

2 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 570; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 52; Munshi Debi Prasad Kayastha, Khan-i-Khanan Nama, p. 50.

3 Abul Fazl, Akbarnama, Vol. III, p. 862.

4 S.P. Verma, 'New Light on Babur Nama Miniatures', Q.R.H.S. Vol. XVIII, 1978-79, p. 117.

5 Abdul Baqi Nihawandi, Maasir-i-Rahimi, Vol. II, pp. 535-536, cited in Stephen P.Blake, Shah Jahanabad, The Sovereign City in Mughal India, 1639-1739, p. 138.

6 Ebba Koch, Mughal Architecture – An Outline of its History and Development, 1526-1858, O.U.P., New Delhi, 2002, p. 91.

the sarais they forget the difficulties undergone by them on rough roads and here their properties were quite safe".[1]

Among his contributions are the significant works of architecture at Burhanpur which became the headquarters of the Mughals after the conquest of Khandesh in 1601 A.D.[2] Burhanpur still has a system of irrigation through underwater pipes called 'qanats' which was laid by Abdur Rahim. These 'qanats' served the useful purpose of bringing water from the foothills of the Satpura range to the town.[3] He started the construction of hamams (Baths) in Persian style in India. He was the first to build such hamams for the poor public including the beggars and faqirs.[4]

The gardens laid out by Abdur Rahim, were known for their beauty. European travellers appreciated the beauty of Fath Bagh and Lal Bagh, two of his famous gardens. Mandelslo, a German traveller who visited Fath Bagh in October 1638 A.D. considered it amongst the best in the country. [5] This garden, built in commemoration of his victory over Muzaffar Khan III of Gujrat was laid along the side of the Sabarmati river at a place called Sarkhej and was spread over an area of one hundred and twenty Jaribs.[6] Jahangir a connoisseur of beauty was greatly charmed by its elegance and remarked that in the whole of Gujrat there is no garden like this. [7]

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1 Abdul Baqi Nihawandi, Maasir-i-Rahimi, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1910-11, p. 609.

2 Ebba Koch, Mughal Architecture – An Outline of its History and Development 1526-1858, pp. 90-92.

3 Ibid., p. 91.

4 H.K. Naqvi, Urbanization and Urban Centres under the Great Mughals, , p. 29; Munshi Debi Parsad Kayastha, Khan-i-Khanan Nama. p. 50.

5 M.S. Commisariat , Mandello's Travels in Western India,, pp. 47-48.

6 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p. 429; Abdul Baqi Nihawandi, Maasir-i-Rahimi, Vol. I, p. 608; cited in P.S.Bedi "Horticulture and Mughal Ruling class : A Case Study of Jahangir's Reign" in Kiran Pawar and Sanjay Subodh, ed., Studies in History, A.B.S. Pub. Jalandhar, p. 32.

7 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p. 431.

Lal Bagh was also a manifestation of the Khan-i-Khanan's love for natural beauty. In the middle of this garden was a deep pond constructed over forty thousand square yards with channels intersecting each other at right angles on all four sides. Artificial water falls were created in these channels. The two mile route leading to the garden from Burhanpur was planted with shady trees. The fact that the Khan-i-Khanan threw it open for the public (Khas-o-aam) added to its appeal[1]. The Khan-i-Khanan's love for architecture is reflected from the fact that his widow also laid out a garden, a tank and some houses in memory of her husband after his demise.

Abdur Rahim is also acclaimed for the patronage provided to painters, illuminators and calligraphists. The Maasir-i-Rahimi mentions the names of five painters – Bahbud, Madhu, Mawlana Ibrahim Naqqash, Mawlana Mushfiq and Miyan Nadim who enjoyed his patronage.[2] Some of these names appear to be identical with those working for the imperial atelier proving that it was possible for artists to move from one atelier to the other.[3] The two illustrated manuscripts from Abdur Rahim's library – the 'Khamsa' of Amir Khusarau and the 'Ramayan' contain paintings attributed to twelve painters from different communities who worked together in his library.[4]

Abdur Rahim was very generous in rewarding artists. Maulana Ibrahim Naqqash who was deprived of the Khan-i-Khanan's service, travelled throughout the empire in search of a patron like him but did not get any and later repented his mistake.[5] Abdur Rahim was also very fond of charity. He used to send thirty thousand rupees to Shah

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1 Ebba Koch, Mughal Architecture – An Outline of its History and Development 1526-1858, p. 92.

2 Mahfuzul Haq, "The Khan-i-Khanan and his Painters", Islamic Culture, Hyderabad, Vol. V, 1931, pp. 621-630.

3 Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 114. n4.

4 S.P. Verma, "Painters under the Khan-i-Khanan", Q.R.H.S., , Vol. 20, 1980-81, p. 37.

5 Mahfuzul Haq, "The Khan-i-Khanan and Painters", Islamic Culture, Vol. V, pp. 621-30.

Musam-ud-din[1], a saint at Delhi, as expense aid. At nights he used to visit the house of darwishes and give them unsolicited money (*Futuh*).

The impetus given to the cause of learning and scholarship by him was tremendous. He also added to the magnificence of the Mughal court by his encouragement and promotion to various arts. His sympathetic interpretation of Hindu thought, religion and culture through the medium of poetry endorses his contribution towards the cultural integration that is distinctive of Akbar's reign.

Mirza Aziz Koka, the last to hold office of *Vakil* under Akbar was a well-bred man known for his accomplishments. Akbar's, playmate and foster brother[2] Aziz Koka was unmatched in sharpness, intelligence and fluency of speech.[3] He also possessed exceptional knowledge of history. A learned man, Aziz Koka had the talent to compose verse. The following is the translation of a verse composed by him :

"since honour and reputation prevented me
from obtaining the desires of my heart,
I will henceforward shatter my reputation with a stone".[4]

He also wrote an illuminated copy of an ode composed by himself, the opening couplet of which was :

"Oh thou whose curled lock is the fetter of my heart,

The love of whom is mingled with all the elements of my body !"[1]

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1 He was the son of Ghazi K. Badakshi a leading noble of Akbar and was married to Abul Fazl's sister and had become a Darwish. Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, p.195; Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p. 166.

2 Akbar used to say, "Between me and Aziz there is the link of a river of milk which cannot pass away"

3 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 331; Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakhirat-ul-Khawanin, p. 66.

4 Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. III, p. 388; Shah Nawaz Khan, gives the following translation of the same verse by Aziz Koka in Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p.331.
"As I've not got happiness from name and fame
After this I'll throw a stone at fame's mirror.

Aziz Koka promoted the cause of learning by patronizing a number of scholars who had a good knowledge of poetry. A poet by the name of Haidari of Tabriz who came to India from Iraq thrice and received great magnanimity at Akbar's court was patronized by Mirza Aziz Koka who paid him two thousand rupees for an Ode.[2] Another poet by the name of Sahmi grew up in the service of Mirza Aziz Koka.[3] Two other poets, Mudami of Badakshan[4] and Muqimi of Sabzavar[5] also received encouragement from Aziz Koka and served under him for some time.

Aziz Koka was a pupil of Muhammad Baqir and Mulla Mir Ali and according to some critics he was in no way inferior in elegance and competence to his masters. He also possessed enormous amount of ready wit. The following aphorism is often quoted from his sayings:

> *"A man should marry four wives – a Persian for companionship, a Khurasani for house-keeping, a Hindu for nursing his children and a woman from Transoxiana to have some one to whip as a warning for the other three".*[6]

Mirza Aziz Koka expressed his fondness for architecture by designing his mausoleum during his life time. His tomb remains the finest building of Jahangir's time in Delhi.[7] Constructed of white marble the tomb is known popularly as 'Chausath Khamba' after the sixty four pillars that divide it internally into twenty five bays. The tomb

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1 Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. III, p. 388.
2 Ibid., p. 302.
3 Ibid., Vol. III, p. 336. He chose his poetical name from the profession of his father who was an arrow maker. The Ain-i-Akbari and Tabaqat-i-Akbari do not mention his name.
4 Ibid, p. 461.
5 Ibid, p. 471, The Ain-i-Akbari and Tabaqat-i-Akbari do not record their names.
6 Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, Vol. II, p. 230; Badaoni, Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh, Vol. II, p. 421; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p.331.
7 Catherine B. Asher, Architecture of Mughal India, p. 141.

is an illustration of the transition from Jahangir's time to the style associated with Shah Jahan's period.

Aziz Koka's fondness and appreciation for painting is revealed from his getting his house in Agra painted by the head of Akbar's painting atelier Abdul Samad. He once told Muhammad Sharif[1] :

> *"... What love your late father Mulla Abdus Samad Musawir showed me ! all these pictures and paintings that you see in this private chamber (Khilwat Khana) were made by his august hand".*[2]

Aziz Koka was a strict Sunni, who fanatically clung to the rigid practices of Islam. Along with some others he questioned Akbar's desire to be a religious guide and accused him of putting Faizi and Abul Fazl in the place of Osman and Ali.[3] He resigned as governor of Gujrat and left for Arabia writing a harsh letter to Akbar who, he felt, had turned against Din-i-Muhammad (Islam) quoting a verse from Sadi :

> *"One who takes the road opposite to that*
>
> *of the prophet would never reach his destination".*[4]

He, however, had a bad experience at Mecca and returned to the court and enlisted himself as a member of Din-i-Ilahi.[5]

The fine art and architecture of the Mughals had been well cultivated by the time Jahangir ascended the throne; but they were to

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1 Son of the famous painter Abdus Samad.

2 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 818; Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakhirat-ul-Khawanin, Vol. I, p. 87; S.P.Verma, "Mughal Paintings, Patrons and Painters", P.IH.C., Kolkatta, 2001, p. 510.

3 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, , Vol. I, p. 326.

4 The letter is contained in an Insha collection "Majma al Afkar" in the Khuda-Baksh Oriental Public Library, Patna, M.S. No. 892 ff 17 ab – 180 b. , I.H. Siddiqui, "Nuqtawis at the Mughal Court", Islamic Culture, Vol. LXXII, No. 3 Hyderabad, 1998, p. 78.

5 Abul Fazl, Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 316.

be further infused with the elegance and sophistication that reflected Jahangir's own tastes. He devoted most of his energy in cultivating the court culture that is characteristic of the Mughals. Under him, connoisseurship flourished as he encouraged his nobility to adorn cities with palaces, gardens and sarais that demonstrated the opulence of the court and the prosperity of his state.

Itmad-ud-Daulah and Asaf Khan, two of his important prime ministers, were the embodiment of Persian sophistication and grandeur. The former who rose to the premier position after the marriage of Nur Jahan with Jahangir in 1611 A.D.[1] was exceptionally well-educated and skilful in writing and transacting state business.[2]

Itmad-ud-Daulah belonged to a family known for its literary and scholarly achievements.[3] He had studied classical Persian poets and had a fine appreciation of the meaning of words and wrote the Shikasta in bold and elegant style.[4] An idea of Itmad-ud-Daulah's power of literary appreciation can also be had from the fact that when three copies of Jahangirnama were prepared, Jahangir presented one of them to Itmad-ud-Daulah.[5]

Jahangir's famous *Wazir* patronized Talib Amuli the famous poet who was later enrolled in Jahangir's court and given the title of Malik-u-Shuara (King of poets).[6] The following is a well-known verse written by him :

"Both first and last, love is aye music and joy.

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1 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p. 200.
2 Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 404; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 1072.
3 His father Muhammad Sharif 'Hijri', his uncles Khwajagi Razi and Mirza Ahmad and his brother Muhammad Tahir Wasli were all poets of varying qualities. Chandra Pant, Nurjahan and her Family, p. 124-129.
4 Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, Eng.trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VI, p. 404.
5 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri,, Vol. II, p. 26-27.
6 Ibid., p. 117.

A pleasant wine both when fresh and when mellow"

Itmad-ud-Daulah shared along with his son Asaf Khan and daughter Nur Jahan a fondness for construction of monuments of stability and endurance. He created a beautiful home that became a centre of imperial social life.[1] One of the best preserved sarais of Jahangir's time, the Sarai Doraha on the Lahore – Delhi route was maintained by him as Doraha was part of his land holdings.[2] The fact that it came to be known as Itmad-ud-Daulah Sarai also confirms that he was its patron.[3]

Itmad-ud-Daulah, Jahangir's senior-most official was also generous and compassionate towards anyone who went to him for help. Jahangir is said to have remarked, "no one ever went to Itmad-ud-Daulah with a petition who turned from him in an injured frame of mind.[4]

Itmad-ud-Daulah's wife Asmat Begum was a highly cultured lady. Jahangir described her amicable qualities in the following words, "... in purity of disposition and in wisdom and the excellencies that are the ornament of women, no mother of the age was ever born equal to her and I did not value her less than my own mother..." [5] Itmad-ud-Daulah also lists the support that he got from her as the most important factor that led to his extraordinary rise to power. Although she never interfered in administrative affairs, but intellectually and culturally she

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1 "People praised it greatly as a delightful palace and an enchanting residence.........." Jahangir,Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, p. 73.

2 Wayne E. Begley, "Four Mughal caravan sarias built during the reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan, Muqarnas, 1983, p. 172; Catherine Asher, Architecture of Mughal India, p. 139.

3 Although this sarai has no inscriptions but between 1611 A.D. and 1615 A.D. travellers mention Doraha as a halting place confirming the time when it was built.

4 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. II, p. 222; Mutamad Khan, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri, Vol. VI, p. 404.

5 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. II, p. 216.



A Sarai constructed by Itmad-ud-Daulah at Doraha.

was remarkable.[1] She made the glorious discovery of the 'Itr-i-Jahangir', an essence, from distilled rose water[2] which is still one of the most sought after luxury goods.[3]

Itmad-ud-Daulah's son Abul Hasan, later known as Asaf Khan, who was the most influential man in court circles after his father's death enjoyed a prominent position in Mughal court circles under Jahangir and Shah Jahan.[4] He was a very versatile man who knew something of every science.[5] Literary qualifications made him a master of Persian style and expression. He lived in great style on account of his inherent fondness for opulence. His winning manners and courteousness in official and social interactions ensured his success as a diplomat. The royal books refer to him as "light of the genius of the illuminati, learned in the science of the peripatetics".[6]

Asaf Khan, like his father, sported an extravagant and lavish lifestyle. His haveli was one of the most notable buildings in the vicinity of the Taj Mahal.[7] His house, reputed for beauty and luxury, was often the site of Jahangir's own rest and entertainment.[8] The accounts of different contemporary travellers who visited the residences of these

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1 A.K. Sarkar, "Itmad-ud-Daulah, A sketch of his Life and Career". Q.R.H.S., Vol. X, p. 163.

2 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. V, p. 270; Irfan Habib, "The technology and Economy of Mughal India", Indian Economic and Social History Review", Vol. XVII, No. 1, p. 25.

3 "Atr of roses, the most excellent of perfumes was discovered in my regime. The mother of Nur Jahan Begum conceived the idea of collecting the oil which rises to the surface when rose water is heated...." Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, pp. 270-271.

4 He was appointed Vakil in 1626 A.D. and continued to hold the post under Shah Jahan, Beni Prasad, History of Jahangir, p. 173.

5 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 293.

6 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, p. 294.

7 I.P. Gupta, Urban Glimpses of the Mughal India- Agra the Imperial Capital in the sixteenth and seventeenth Centuries, p. 70.

8 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. II, pp. 24, 81, 200.

nobles corroborate this.[1] In Indian languages, adjectives derived from the word 'Mughal' rightfully connote the ultimate in luxury and style.

Manrique refers to Asaf Khan's furniture inlaid with precious stones and riches and the walls of his palace panelled with floral design and covered with silk hangings.[2] The rooms of his palace were adorned with fine porcelain vases and flower pots, brought from distant lands.[3]

Asaf Khan and his father Itmad-ud-Daulah were known for hosting feasts. Once on Nauroz (new year day), the greatest festival borrowed from Persia, Asaf Khan invited Jahangir for a feast and welcomed the emperor with a carpet of velvet, woven with gold, spread over a distance of one kos. His presents to the Emperor included, jewels, ornaments, clothes of delicate stuff, four horses and one camel.[4] An idea of the variety of dishes served by Asaf Khan at a highly placed dinner can be had from the description of Asaf Khan's banquet held for Sir Thomas Roe. [5]

Interesting accounts that reflect the grandeur of the nobility, and their reckless expenditure or opulence should not lead us to believe that they lacked in generosity, commitment to learning and promotion of arts. Asaf Khan was known to encourage literary activity. He wrote a Masnavi depicting in verse the story of Khusrau and Shirin and dedicated it to Jahangir entitling it Nur Namah[6] (the writing of light). He was known for his patronage to learned men. One of the best known

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1 Edward Terry, A Voyage to East India, Purchas Vol. IX, pp. 1-54, Glasgow, 1905; Peter Mundy, Travels in Asia, Vol. II, ed., R.C. Temple, Hakluyat Society, London, 1914;

2 Manrique, Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique, 1629-43, Vol. II, trans. and ed., C.E. Luard and F.H. Hosten, Hakluyt Society, Vol. II, London, 1927, p. 426.

3 Francois Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire, 1656-68, p. 247; Mannucci, Storia do Mogor, 1653-1708, Vol. II, p. 426.

4 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, pp. 319-310.

5 Purchas, Vol. IV, p. 421, cited in P.N. Chopra Life and Letters under the Mughals, p. 36.

6 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol. I, p. 222.

Sanskrit scholars of Jahangir's time, Jaganath, who later became Jahangir's court pandit and was called 'Pandit Raj' was patronized by Asaf Khan[1] and wrote 'Asaf Vijaya' an eulogy of Asaf Khan.

The Mughal emperor's passion for architecture was echoed by the nobility who had a definite role in shaping its image. Asaf Khan was not only a noted patron of architecture but also well versed in the subtleties of this craft (Sanat)[2] and was often involved in the planning and construction of imperial buildings.

European travellers, who refer to Lahore as one of the primary cities with increasing importance, talk of a Charbagh constructed by Asaf Khan at Lahore, although the building does not exist now.[3] When Shah Jahan ordered the reconstruction of Shah Burj, also called Musamman Burj, as he was dissatisfied with its appearance, Asaf Khan was asked to supervise the work. He presented the emperor with several plans from which he made the final decision.[4] Asaf Khan thus made a substantial contribution in shaping the image of Mughal architecture.

His love for the aesthetic found representation in the creation of the Nishat Bagh (garden of gladness) situated on the bank of the Dal Lake in Kashmir. It was extended over twelve terraces. The court authors of Shah Jahan rate it next only to the emperor's Shalimar Garden.[5] As a connoisseur of beauty and a man of fine taste he was fond of painting which reached a stage of perfection under Jahangir

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1 A Telugu Brahmin whose works like 'manoramakuca-mardana' on grammar and Chitra mimansakhandana on rhetoric are well known to scholars of Sanskrit, H.K. Sherwani, Cultural Trends in Medieval India, p. 81.
2 Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badshahnama,Vol. I, p. 224, vide Ebba Koch, Mughal Architecture – An Outline of its History and Development, p. 116.
3 Catherine B. Asher, Artchitecture of Mughal India, p. 137.
4 Ibid. p. 179.
5 Ebba Koch, *Mughal Architecture*, p.116.

and continued to thrive under Shah Jahan.[1] Asaf Khan was one of the prominent patrons of the art of painting at the royal court under them.[2]

With Asaf Khan at the helm of affairs both under Jahangir and Shah Jahan Persian court traditions were followed with a style and grace that overawed spectators. Under his supervision the court decorum was followed very strictly, The *Vakil-us-Sultanat's* family performing *'Kornish'* and *'Chahar Taslim'* and sitting down only when the emperor demanded them to do so the third time reflect the court etiquettes followed in the empire.[3] Another important Persian festival, the *'Jashn-i-Gulab posh'* was celebrated with Asaf Khan along with Shahzadas presenting Surahis filled with rose water or with the aroma of orange (Arq-i-fitnah') to the emperor. [4] Asaf Khan also enjoyed the reputation of being very gentle, affable and humane and was known to have looked after his servants very well.[5]

Shah Jahan's reign represented the height of Mughal splendour and affluence that dazzled visitors.[6] His reign also witnessed the completion of the process of Mughal cultural transformation from the disorderliness of the Turko-Mongols to ceremonialism, the style of the Persians. This process that began with Humayun's exile in Persia was heightened under the influence of his Persian wives and men of Persian background like Bairam Khan, Abdur Rahim, Itmad-ud-Daulah, Asaf Khan and Afzal Khan holding the highest offices in the empire.

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1 Mughal art of painting is best described by Abul Fazl who says, 'Drawing the likeness of anything is called Tasvir" Ain-i-Akbari,Vol. I, p. 113
2 B.P. Saksena, History of Shah Jahan at Dihli, p. 266.
3 Manrique, Travels of Fray Sebastian Manrique, 1629-1643, pp. 113, 120.
4 Muhammad Azhar Ansari, Social Life of the Mughal Emperors, 1526-1707, p. 211.
5 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 294.
6 Mannucci, Storia do Mogor, Vol. I, p. 206; Francois Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire, p. 202.

Afzal Khan who was appointed *Diwan* a year after Shah Jahan's accession was an influential man[1] of high literary attainments who distinguished himself in the realm of letters. An important cultural contribution of Afzal Khan was the encouragement given to literary activity. He patronized a large number of Persian scholars among whom Aminai Qazvini and Jalaluddin Tabatabai are prominent. Chandra Bhan Brahman, the author of Chahar Chaman who was called 'Hindu-i-Farzidan' (Persian knowing Hindu) by Shah Jahan was also patronized by Afzal Khan.[2] Shah Jahan's reign saw the influx of a large number of poets from Persia. Afzal Khan was the patron of Muhammad Faruq a poet very popular for his delightful verses.

Afzal Khan was also known for his elegant and ornate style in writing private and official letters of correspondence. The fanciful imagery of his letters are still held as models. Such men added to the grandeur of the Mughal court. He was an excellent man irreproachable in conduct and was admired for his eloquence, knowledge of astronomy, mathematics and accounts.[3]

An important cultural contribution of Afzal Khan was the construction of the Chini ka Rauza, the best example of tile decoration in India,[4] for his own tomb. The most striking feature of the building was the tile decoration that covered the exterior of the building with exclusive Persian motifs. It was a very costly style of decoration in inlaid

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1 Although Asaf Khan, the emperor's father-in-law was the Vakil-us-Sultanat, he did not get any opportunity to dominate Afzal Khan, whose ascendancy over the Vakil was clearly established. Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badshahnama, Vol. II, p. 234.

2 Hira Lal Chopra, 'The Hindu Munshi of the Mughul Court", P.I.H.C., *Agra*, 1956, pp. 274-283.

3 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. I, p. 153.

4 Persia had been the centre of the art of glazed tiling and from there it was introduced into India. R.Nath, "Tile Decoration and Chini Ka Rauza", Medieval India - A Miscellany, Vol. I, p. 260.

marble but the art died out with subsequent domination of marble and other forms of decoration.[1]

Islam Khan, Shah Jahan's *Diwan* for six years had full knowledge of the rational and traditionary sciences. He was known to be a calligraphist as well. On account of his sound learning coupled with his military capacity he earned the title of *'Sahib-i-Saif-o-Qalam'* (master of pen and sword). He was a good writer and a poet and was also the patron of a poet called Salim, a native of Teheran, who wrote a short masnavi on his patron's exploits in Kuch Bihar and Assam.[2]

Sadullah Khan was the most learned and efficient *Diwan* in the long line of Mughal *Wazirs*. Apart from his literary accomplishments he was just and honest in the performance of his duties. A man of great wisdom[3] he was devoted to training in traditionary sciences. Besides Persian and Arabic he also knew Turkish. Being a fluent speaker and conversationist,[4] Sadullah Khan's literary bent of mind made him encourage scholars. Whenever he heard of accomplished people he kept them in his service on a larger salary (bish-qarar).[5] He was the patron of Abdul Hamid Lahori. When the emperor desired to appoint an author who could write his memoirs in the style of Abul Fazl's Akbarnama he recommended him to the Emperor.[6] Sadullah Khan was a skilled writer of prose[7] and the letters drafted by him were known for their style and elegance. He was also renowned for his ready wit and presence of mind. [8]

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1 R.Nath, "Tile Decoration and Chini Ka Rauza", Medieval India - A Miscellany, Vol. I, p. 260.
2 B.P. Saksena, History of Shah Jahan of Dihli, p. 253.
3 Mannucci, Storia do Mogor, Vol. I, p. 202.
4 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 638.
5 Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Dhakirat-ul-Khawanin, Part II, p. 191.
6 Abdul Hamid Lahori, Badshahnama, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol. VII, p. 3
7 Mufazzal Khan, Tarikh-i-Mufazzali, Eng. trans. Elliot & Dowson, Vol.VII, p. 142; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part-II, p. 637; B.P. Saksena, History of Shahjahan of Dihli, p. 247.
8 Manucci, Storia do Mogor, Vol. I, p. 204.

As *Diwan* of the emperor who had a passion for architecture,[1] Sadullah Khan was aware of the potential of architecture as a means of self representation. His mansion at Shahjahanabad was one of the finest in the city.[2] It had hamams of marble with glazed skylight in its precincts. He also supervised the construction of the Jami Masjid, the only structure in the city that matched the eminence of the palace fortress.[3]

Sadullah Khan, known for his fondness for grandeur, furnished the hall of special audience (*Diwan*-i-Khas) at the palace fortress with carpets worth sixty thousand rupees. He also composed a verse and inscribed it on the wall of the Aramgah[4] for which Shah Jahan honoured him with a special Khila't and a promotion of 7,000 zat and 7,000 Sawar.

Sadullah Khan contributed to the cultural set up of Shah-Jahanabad[5] where he constructed a square (chowk) in the middle of Khas Bazaar[6] the street that linked the Jami Masjid and the palace. The chowk had shops selling cloth, medicine, food items, birds and fruits. Physicians, astrologers and dancing girls carried on their trade from the chowk.[7] Chowk Sadullah Khan also became a place for a 'Nakhas' (an

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1 Muhammad Salih Kambu, Amal-i-Salih, legitimates his emperor's passion for buildings as a necessity of good rule, Vol. III, p. 18, vide Ebba Koch, Mughal Architecture, p. 13.

2 Stephen P. Blake, Shahjahanabad, The Soverign City of the Mughals, 1639-1739, p. 81.

3 Muhammad Salih Kambu, Amal-i-Salih, Vol. III, p. 51; Shama Mitra Chenoy, Shahjahanabad, A City of Delhi, 1638-1857, p. 47, Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1998, p. 47.

4 Muhammad Waris, Badshahnamah, fol. 404. cited in Stephen P. Blake, Shahjahanabad, the Sovereign City of the Mughal,, 1639-1739, p. 31.

5 An eighteenth century geographer wrote, ShahJahanbad was always the Dar-ul-Mulk (seat of the Empire of the great Sultans) and the Markaz-i-Dairah (Centre of the circle of Islam).

6 The place came to be known as Chowk Sadulla Khan, Shama Mitra Chenoy, Shah Jahanbad, the city of Delhi, 1638-1857.

7 Francois Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire, p. 243.

impromptu or elementary bazaar) where people came from neighbouring areas to sell mainly perishable goods of daily consumption.[1]

Sadullah Khan was also known for his sense of justice and charity. He never acted tyrannously towards peasants in collection of government dues and never allowed fear or favouritism to influence his decisions.[2] In one of the letters addressed to crown prince Muhammad Muazzam, Aurangzeb quotes Sadullah Khan, "Justice and charity are the qualities which are the best means of satisfying the creator".[3] Sadullah Khan's greatness also lay in preserving the qualities of honesty and loyalty in his dealings. In the Ruqqat-i-Alamgiri, Aurangzeb records that once being disengaged from prayer Sadullah Khan raised his hands asking for blessings from the Almighty. When asked what his wish was, the great man replied "to be an honest man."[4]

Sadullah Khan was always hopeful of a great future of the Mughal empire. He believed that no age was without men of ability – all that was needed was a wise master to find them out, cherish them and get work done by them.

Shah Jahan's son and successor Aurangzeb, generally considered to be the last great emperor of the Mughal dynasty, ruled over an empire ridden with persistent warfare in the Deccan and increased factionalism among the nobility. He, therefore failed to continue the trend of his predecessors that had bestowed peace, prosperity and culture to the people of India.[5]

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1 Francois Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire, pp. 243-244; H. K. Naqvi, "Shahjahanbad, the Mughal Delhi 1638-1803, An Introduction", in Frykenberg, ed., Delhi, p. 145.
2 Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, p. 643.
3 Aurangzeb, Ruqqat-i-Alamgiri, Eng. trans. J.H. Bilimoria, p. 48.
4 Ibid., p. 48.
5 Jadunath Sarkar, "The Condition of the People in Aurangzib's reign" in Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subramanyam, ed., The Mughal State, O.U.P., 2003, p. 301.

The political instability of Aurangzeb's reign paralled the lack of vitality in artistic production and thriving art forms that had been hitherto nurtured by the royalty and nobility.[1] Aurangzeb's austere and moralist lifestyle which is often held responsible for the cultural decline of the empire failed to have any marked effect on the lifestyle of the nobility that continued to lead an ostentatious life while the empire witnessed a decline in territory.[2]

The nobility, in general continued to encourage and patronise different art forms in a changed scenario where the emperor was no longer the model patron for them to emulate, but a record of the involvement of his prime ministers towards socio-cultural enrichment in a significant way also seems to be missing.

Mir Jumla (Muazzam Khan), who became Shah Jahan's *Wazir* in 1656 A.D. a little before his master was forced to relinquish the throne in favour of Aurganzeb, was a learned man well versed in the Quran and the Hadis, with great command over the Persian language[3] and was counted amongst the scholar courtiers of Shah Jahan's reign. His intelligence and foresight won him epithets like 'Asaf of the age' (Asaf ud dauran) and 'Plato of the age'.[4]

Muazzam Khan remained involved in military exercises for long periods of time and therefore could not make any significant contribution in socio-cultural advancement but he was always sympathetic towards the well being of the subjects by strictly enforcing

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1 D. Pant, Commercial Policy of the Mughals, p. 237. This led to decline of village industries and the erosion of art and culture which resulted in the economic impoverishment of India. Jadunath Sarkar, "The condition of the People in Aurangzib's Reign" in Muzzafar Alam and Sanjay Subramanyam, ed., The Mughal State., p. 306.

2 Satish Chandra, "Standard of Living: Mughal India" in Tapan Ray Chaudhuri and Irfan Habib,ed., The Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol. I, p. 470.

3 Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, The Life of Mir Jumla-The General of Aurangzeb, p. 351.

4 B.P.Saksena, History of Shah Jahan of Dihli, p. 247.

orders against oppression and plunder by the Mughal armies[1] in the North-East.

Muazzam Khan was known to be a man of justice and impartial integrity[2] but writers like Bernier and Mannucci have accused him of treachery[3] for he shifted his loyalties quite often. He was undoubtedly an opportunist, but it must not be forgotten that he was confronted with equally unscrupulous and formidable enemies.

An important contribution of Muazzam Khan to the Mughal dynasty and to world is the gift of the Kohinoor diamond, now in the possession of the British Crown.[4] The diamond, unparallel in size and beauty, was one of the most magnificent gifts ever offered to Shah Jahan. It weighted two hundred and sixteen Surkhs and was valued that time at two lakhs and sixteen thousand rupees.[5]

Some works of public utility established by Muazzam Khan are still found in the Deccan and in Bengal. In Telingana, where he spent many years, there are several monuments in his name. In Hyderabad, a tank, a garden and a mansion bearing his name still exist. A village called Saifabad, near Haiderabad thrived under his assistance.[6]

His fondness for architecture is proved from the fact that he constructed some buildings at the fort of Gandikota which included a

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1 Sudhindra Nath Bhattacharya, A History of Mughal North-East Frontier Policy, Spectrum Publication, Guwahati, 1998, p. 307.

2 Jesson, the English factor at Agra wrote to the Surat authorities (15th August 1656) about Mir Jumla "Tis reported he does good justice........" The English Factories in India, Vol. X, p.71.

3 Francois Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire, pp. 169-170; Mannucci, Storio do Mogor, Vol. II, p. 271.

4 Francois Bernier, Travels in the Mogul Empire (1606–1668). p. 22; Mannucci, Storio do Mogor, p.228; B.P. Saksena, History of Shah Jahan of Dihli, p. 246.

5 Surkh is said to be the same as ratti, the red seed used in weighing gold and silver, Khafi Khan, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, Vol. I, p. 753; Shah Nawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Vol. II, Part I, p. 256.

6 Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, The Life of Mir Jumla–The General of Aurangzeb, 355.

Jama Masjid.[1] He also improved the road from Dacca to Gandikota fort.[2] A bridge constructed by him over the Pagla river near Dacca has been described by Tavernier as a fine piece of construction. Muazzam Khan also built a number of rest houses for the general public.[3]

Despite the wealth he possessed, Muazzam Khan was known to be corrupt for he stopped the trade by the English at Kasim Bazaar in 1659 A.D., unless some presents were offered to him. Once this was done the permission was granted. In 1660 A.D. Muazzam Khan demanded twenty thousand pagodas from the English factors and asked them to remit thirty two thousand pagodas which he owed to the company.[4] The prevalence of such corrupt practices by the senior most officers of the empire who along with others were also appropriating a major share in the distribution of land revenue, apart from reflecting the character of the individual concerned had a further negative impact on the economy.[5] It also reflects that Aurangzeb's puritan and idealist way of life did not in any way influence the ruling classes.

Jafar Khan, besides being a man of learning[6], was known for geniality of temperament, righteousness and affable manners. Extremely civil and courteous, he set an example to be followed in excellence of manners (Mirza Manishi) and no one could equal him in

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1 It is described as one of the largest mosques in the Madras Presidency.

2 Dacca District Gazetteer, quoted in Jagdish Narayan Sarkar, The Life of Mir Jumla - The General of Aurangzeb, p. 362.

3 Mustaid Khan, Maasir-i-Alamgiri, Vol. I, p. 638 cited in P.N. Chopra, Life and letters under the Mughals, p. 242.

4 The English Factories in India, 1955-60, pp. 292-93 and pp. 391-39.

5 A farman of Aurangzeb preserved in the Mirat-i-Ahmadi illustrates the different ways by which senior Mughal nobility squeezed trade and commerce through unauthorised taxes, Athar Ali, The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb, p. 159.

6 Manucci, Storia Do Mogor, , Vol. II, p. 145.

Mirzai etiquette,[1] the rules of which were laid down by 'Mirza Namah', an early seventeenth century manual.[2]

Jafar Khan, despite his goodness was representative of the decline in the character of the nobility. When in 1667 A.D., the French were keen to obtain a farman for trade from the emperor they offered Jafar Khan ten thousands rupees in order to get the Parwana that would allow them the facility.[3]

Jafar Khan, although known for his right mindedness, was very fond of drinking and continued to drink heavily despite Aurangzeb admonishing him and telling him that he was under obligation to set a good example for the subjects. Infact he died on account of his health failing due to excessive drinking.[4] Although he enjoyed great respect as *Wazir*, no measure of reforms, no earnestness to patronize scholars or artisans, no desire to improve the condition of the people can be ascribed to him.[5]

Asad Khan, who enjoyed a long period of thirty years as *Wazir*, was a learned man but Aurangazeb's involvement in the Deccan that coincided with Asad Khan's *Wazir*ship left no scope for him to pursue cultural interests. Besides, the *Wazir* chose to work in total conformity with the emperor who disliked painting music, architecture (except for mosques) and poetry (except for verses from the Holy Quran) more for reasons of temperament and training than for their being unislamic

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1 Syed Anees Jahan, Aurangzeb in Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, p. 261. Although the word Adab was some times used in Mughal India, the current term for gentlemanliness in a prince or a noble was Mirzai. The term was used for one who was highly well bred and cultured.

2 Maulavi M. Hidayat Hussain trans. and ed., "The Mirza Namah" (The Book of the Perfect Gentlemen) of Mirza Kamran, Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal 1913, p. 9.)

3 Corruption in trade prevailed everywhere and no assistance was rendered by the authorities unless they were paid for it. Athar Ali, The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb, p.158.

4 Mannucci, Storia do Mogor, Vol. II, p. 146.

5 Laiq Ahmad, Prime Ministers of Aurangzeb, p. 99.

گماشتهای جاگیرداران و کروریان حال و استقبال پرگنه گوپامئو تابع سرکار خیرآباد
مضاف صوبهٔ اوده بدانند که بموجب فرمان عالیشان سعادت عنوان
بندگان حضرت خدیو زمین و زمان خداوند مکین و مکان وسیلهٔ آرامش عالمیان
ظل ظلیل ایزد متعال .. مظهر اتم پروردگار رحمت اعم آفریدگار بانی مبانی جهانبانی
مشید قانون گیتی ستانی خلافت پناه ظل اله مرقوم چهاردهم شهر
ذی القعده سال سی و نهم از جلوس

مهر
اسد خان

موضع کورسندا وغیره من اعمال پرگنه مذکور
به جمع پانزدهم هزار دام و دو صد و شصت و یک روپیه حاصل آنست از محال جاگیر
شیخ محمد انور ناحیات مشار الیه در جاگیر او محسوب خواهد بود لیکن از آن در
وجه مدد معاش مسماة دولاری والدهٔ مشار الیه و دیگر متعلقان شیخ محمد منور
و شیخ نعمت الله والد و جد شیخ مذکور حسب الضمن مقرر گشته باید که مطابق
فرمان والاشان عمل نموده مواضع مذکور را بتصرف آنها بازگذارند و از
جمیع وجوه و عوارض معاف و مرفوع القلم شمارند که حاصل آنرا صرف
معیشت نموده بدعای بقای دولت ابد طراز اشتغال نمایند و اگر در
محل دیگر چیزی داشته باشند آنرا اعتبار نه کنند درین باب قدغن دانند
تاریخ بیست و چهارم شهر ذی الحجه سنه ۳۹ جلوس قلم شد صح

برات ثبت

ضمن در وجه مدد معاش مسماة دولاری والدهٔ شیخ محمد انور و دیگر
متعلقان بموجب فرمان والاشان موضع کورسندا وغیره دو موضع
من اعمال پرگنه گوپامئو سرکار خیرآباد از محال جاگیر موی الیه ناحیات او
محسوب جاگیر و بعد به آنها الطریق مدد معاش

کورسندا موضع و ملا بهیر موضع

Parwana issued by Asad Khan

THE PARWANAH OF ASAD KHAN

All the gumushtahs of jagirdars, and the present and future karoris of Parganah Gopa Mau, the dependency of the sarkar Khairabad, an appendage of the subah of Awadh be aware that according to the Exalted Farman (containing) the happy title of His Majesty, the sovereign of the world and the universe, the master of all property and inhabitants, the means of the repose of the mankind, the reflection of the Sublime God, the manifestation of the most perfect Protector (parwardigar), the Divine Gift of the Creator of the Universe, the builder of the foundation of the government (jahanbani), the architect of the rules of the world-conquest, the refuge of the khilafat, the shadow of God, dated 14th Dhilqadah the 39th regnal year of the auspicious occasion, the mawza of KORSINDA etc., a dependency of the above mentioned parganah, with a jama of fifteen thousand two hundred and sixty one dams has been bestowed upon Shaikh Mahammad Anwar as the mahal of his gajir till his life-time and after (his death) it will be turned as *wajh-i-madad-maash* of Musammat Dulari, his mother, and other dependents (like) Shaikh Muhammad Munawwar and Shaikh Nimat Allah, the father and the grand-father. Therefore, it is incumbent on you to act in compliance with the Exalted *Farman*. You should leave the above-mentioned mauza in their possession and it should be exempted from all *wujuhat* and *awaridat*, so that utilizing its hasil as their livelihood they may pray for the perpetuity of this Dominion. If they hold any other thing elsewhere it should not be taken notice of. This should be considered an order.

Written on the 24th Dhilhijjah 39th regnal year of the Auspicious Accession.

Seal of Asad Khan, the servant of Aurangzib.

In connection with *wajh-i-madad-i-maash* of Musammat Dulari, the mother of Shaikh Muhammad Anwar and other dependents in compliance with the Exalted Farman, the *mauza* of KORSANDAH etc. two *mauzas* from the *'amal'* of Parganah Gopa Mau, Sarkar Khairabad from the *mahal-i-jogir* of the aforesaid person up to his life as jagir and after his death in the form of *madad-i-maash*.

Korsanda	and	Mala Bhir
mauza		mauza

acts. However, he was a religious man who indulged in charity. A Parwana issued by him dated 16th December, 1586 A.D. is a proof of this.

Asad Khan was an example of loyalty to one's master. The conquest of Golcunda could be achieved through his efforts as his presence on the scene of warfare was a sober influence on the Persian nobles and prevented quarrel among them. Under his influence the soldiers displayed exemplary devotion to the imperial cause. He cannot be censured for partiality to the enemy on account of Golkunda being a Shia state.[1] There are other incidents also to prove Asad Khan's loyalty towards Aurangzeb and the latter's trust in him.[2]

However, Asad Khan, who possessed enormous wealth, preferred to maintain a large harem[3] rather than spending it on any kind of encouragement to the cause of learning or building activity for public welfare or patronizing artists and craftsmen. The lack of vitality in artistic production in times of military and political instability could also have been the result of increased factionalism among the nobility and persistent warfare in the Deccan.

Asad Khan, like some of his predecessors, was known to be corrupt in commercial dealings. William Norris, the British Ambassador to the Mughal court, had to offer presents to the *Wazir* to win his support for submitting a petition for friendly commercial relations before the emperor.[4]

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1 Although Jadunath Sarkar has accused the Shias for their half heartedness in the siege of Golkunda, History of Aurangzib, Vol. IV, Longman, New Delhi, 1972, p. 310. Asad Khan who was sent with Kambaksh to get reinforcements even risked his life for the imperial cause while doing so.

2 When Aurangzeb left Islampuri after the conquest of Jinji , he left Asad Khan to guard his family. Shahnawaz Khan, Maasir-ul-Umara, Eng. trans. Vol. I, p. 273; Jadunath Sarkar, History of Aurangzib, Vol. V, p. 160.

3 Mannucci who enjoyed the confidence of his wife Naval Bai, describes the life in his harem, Storia do Mogor, Vol. II, pp. 352-53.

4 Ibid, Vol. III, p. 300.

In a significant development, after the death of Aurangzeb[1], Asad Khan and his son Zulfikar Khan were responsible for the reversal of Jaziya[2] proving the fact that Aurangzeb's orthodox views were not always to the liking of his nobility[3] and Asad Khan represented that section of the nobility which considered Jaziya as inexpedient.[4] The rejection of Aurangzeb's orthodox policies by the nobility and these being given up within a decade of his death by his descendants demonstrates the practical impossibility of basing the State in India on Shariat and making a distinction between Hindus and Muslims. Satish Chandra rightly remarks that even under an emperor like Aurangzeb, the ruling classes continued to draw their moral sustenance from their beliefs and convictions and the intellectual and cultural ethos of the nobility could not be determined by the outlook of individual rulers. [5]

The encouragement to literary activity, various forms of art, and extensive building activity like mosques, madarsas, khanqahs, sarais, hamams, gardens, particularly by prime ministers under Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan apart from asserting their authority enhanced their reputation by earning them the admiration of the subjects. Such endeavors also provided gainful employment to a large number of artisans. They also bring to light the fact that the immense wealth possessed by the aristocracy was not entirely wasted in

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1 Precisely nine days after the accession of the new monarch.

2 Satish Chandra, Parties and Politics of the Mughal Court, 1707-1740, pp. 74-75.

3 Khafi Khan, Muntakhab-ul-Lubab, pp. 940, 947, cited in Ishrat Haque, Glimpses of Mughal Society and Culture – A Study based on Urdu literature in the second half of the eighteenth century, Concept Pub., New Delhi, 1992, p.91; Athar Ali, The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb, p. 105; Satish Chandra, "Religious Policy of Aurangzeb during the latter part of his reign", I.H.R., Vol. XIII, p. 95; Satish Chandra Mughal Religious Policy, the Rajputs and the Deccan, Vikas, New Delhi, 1995, p. 197.

4 Satish Chandra, Essays on Medieval Indian History, O.U.P. New Delhi, 2003, p. 347.

5 Ibid., p. 57.

extravagance but used for encouraging public welfare. The political and cultural behavior patterns of the nobility did result in important socio-cultural changes in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

However, the situation began changing in the last decades of Aurangzeb rule and the decline of the empire is chiefly seen in terms of degeneration of the nobility. The general indifference among the royalty and nobility to various arts which is reflected in the regression of medieval Indian culture in the eighteenth century could be ascribed to the economic decline of the nobility.

"Men who once led a life of luxury are without means of livelihood,

They are like a sparkling spring that has gone dry."[1]

The decline in the fortunes of the nobility was bound to result in breakdown of the patronage system, for which the Mughal nobility was renowned, resulting in unemployment and hardships for their beneficiaries.

"Now thousands of people are without employment,
Only a few lucky ones succeed in getting some work."[2]

However, the Mughal court despite its decline remained a model for others to emulate. The Marathas, Jats and even the French followed the lifestyles of the Mughal nobility. Their forms of address, their conventions of behaviour, their etiquettes became recognized as the standard of conduct. The ostentatious pattern of Mughal court life was destined to survive and it received a new lease of life in regional kingdoms like Awadh, Bengal and Hyderabad whose rise coincided with the decline of the Mughal empire.

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1 Khwaja Mir Dard, Diwan-i-Dard, p. 36. Eng. trans. of couplet in Ishrat Haque, Glimpses of Mughal Society and Culture, p. 74.

2 Mir Taqi Mir, Kulliyat-i-Mir, Vol. I, p. 239, Eng. trans. of couplet in Ishrat Haque, Glimpses of Mughal Society and Culture, p. 74.

Chapter - VII

CONCLUSION

The office of the Prime Minister has always been an important one in the history of any nation. In a monarchial system of government where he was the premier noble and the highest official after the Emperor, he was almost indispensable to the development of polity by virtue of his potential to help, advise and if possible restrain the monarch. Cutting across periodization of historical phases, one finds scores of prime ministers who have held their office with rare distinctions. The plans and programmes envisaged by them may appear strange when judged by modern standards, but when one analyses the results of their efforts they appear as high achievers, who played a significant role not only in influencing the political set-up of the time but left their impact on social, cultural and economic life as well.

In view of the multifarious responsibilities and nearness to the monarch, the Prime Minister, during the period under review, had to be a skilled statesman and an accomplished courtier. Since he was the vital link between the sovereign and the subjects, he needed to possess the ability to deal with both in such a manner as to secure for himself the acceptance and affection of both.

Being the highest official in the state, he has been regarded as a 'partaker of sovereignty without whom no state can be stable and prosperous'. Although his impact on non-political issues may seem peripheral or even negligible, but numerous contemporary accounts prove that they were trend setters in many ways. From time to time, their wise deliberations did result in expansion and consolidation of

the Mughal empire that ushered an era of economic prosperity as well as promoted welfare activities resulting in socio-cultural upliftment of the masses.

The Persian institution of *Wizarat* was incorporated into Islamic polity around 750 A.D. with the rise of the Abbasids and gradually the office assumed so much power that the *Wazir* became the channel through whom the king exercised his authority.

Although Islamic jurists mention the existence of two kinds of *Wizarat*, the *Wazir-i-Tafwid* (unlimited *Wizarat*) and the *Wazir-i-Tanfiz* (limited *Wizarat*), it was the latter which was more suited to the requirements of medieval Indian polity. The nature of the institution underwent a continuous process of change as a result of the emperor's attitude, the behavior of the *Wazirs,* and the social milieu of the time but its historical continuity highlights the importance of the institution.

The *Wazir* became the most influential official with the establishment of an independent kingdom of Ghazni with civil and military powers in his jurisdiction. The *Wizarat* as an institution became more well defined with the establishment of the Sultanat in India and the *Wazir* became very powerful till Balban realised the danger of handing it to ambitious men and concentrated all power in his hands. Allaudin Khilji revived the tradition of combining civil and military duties in the *Wazir,* although throughout the Khilji period the *Wizarat* remained in the hands of military generals like Malik Kafur and Khusro Khan.

The Tughluq period is considered as a landmark in the development of the institution by virtue of the high status enjoyed by the *Wazirs* and the novel experiments introduced by the Sultans. The appointment of Indian Muslims to the post and its being offered to the son in succession to his father under the Tughluqs was a significant

development. After a brief period of chaos that followed Timur's invasion, the Wizarat developed into a well defined institution.

Babur's *Wazirs* Baqi Chagniani and Nizamuddin Khalifa functioned with remarkable ease in military as well as diplomatic field and appear to be influential advisors to the Emperor. The fact that Nizamuddin Khalifa even tried to regulate the succession to the Mughal throne is symbolic of a new dimension that emerged amongst the nobility – the realisation that the empire belonged to the ruling dynasty and not to the ruler and that with the absence of a well-defined law of succession, choices and preferences within the ruling dynasty could always be made.

Humayun's unsettled and fragmented reign saw the continuation of the same policy that was initiated by Babur. He even attempted to distribute the powers of the *Vakil* by delegating financial functions to the *Wazir* in 1545 A.D. but the experiment was not very well received by Qaracha Khan, the official concerned.

The accession of Akbar in 1556 A.D. heralded a new age in the history of the *Wizarat,* with Bairam Khan, the only one in the long line of Mughal prime ministers enjoying the status of what may be called 'the position of the first-class *Wazir*' (*Wazir-i-Tafwid*). The premier noble under Akbar came to be known as the *'Vakil-i-Sultanat'* Akbar's ill-experience of Bairam Khan brought about a marked change in the power and prestige enjoyed by the incumbents to the office following 1560 A.D. Divested of a major chunk of their powers by the creation of the office of the *Diwan,* the later *Vakils* enjoyed rank and status, but no power.

The appointment of Todar Mal to the highest office in the empire was a milestone in the sense that he was the only non-Muslim who was appointed to this office without having to compromise on his religious

beliefs. Todar Mal must have shared Akbar's vision of a vast and enduring empire. While Akbar genuinely desired to strengthen the empire by bringing the two major communities closer to one another, Todar Mal used the administrative machinery at his command to facilitate the process.

Both Jahangir and Shahjahan were lucky to enjoy the services of great men like Itmad-ud-Daulah, Asaf Khan, Afzal Khan and Sadullah Khan. Their services to the Mughal throne not only enriched the empire culturally, but also gave it that force and vitality that substantiated its claim of being the most promising and productive phase of Indian history.

Despite the troubled times of Aurangzeb, when forces of decay had begun to assert themselves, his prime ministers displayed unflinching loyalty to the emperor. Although their services were mainly used in military expeditions, with hardly any record of their financial and administrative activities, their personal ambitions never came into clash with the emperor nor did they try to aggrandize their position and act independently.[1]

Between 1526-1707 A.D., the prime minister theoretically remained the head of the administration. The good government that the Mughal rulers gave their subjects was a great factor in winning the affection of their subjects and perpetuating their rule. The Mughal ideals of benevolence, justice and good governance were to a large extent the result of the endeavours of the emperor's chief advisor - the Prime Minister.

Right through the medieval times there was no clear cut demarcation of civil and military functions. Most Mughal prime

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[1] Laiq Ahmad, Prime Ministers of Aurangzeb, p. 145.

ministers made significant contribution in expanding Mughal frontiers and enhancing the power and prestige of the crown.

While Babur and Humayun received the most crucial help from Nizamudin Khalifa and Bairam Khan in the establishment and restoration of the Mughal empire, Todar Mal, Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan, Sadullah Khan and Mir Jumla led Mughal armies to glorious victories that brought about large scale military successes and territorial expansion. Mughal prime ministers like Bairam Khan, Itmad-ud-Daulah and Asaf Khan strengthened the administrative set up tremendously. While Bairam Khan moulded the crucial first four years of Akbar's reign into one of dynamic growth in territory as well as resources, the dependable Itmad-ud-Daulah, without bringing about any radical change in the administrative set up, gave the empire a certain cohesion that steered the country out of danger. Sadullah Khan, who was regarded as the best Diwan in the long line of Mughal *Wazirs* left behind a great tradition of public service and created conditions of peace and prosperity that made Shah Jahan's reign a prosperous one.

One of the greatest factors that contributed to Mughal success was the sound economic base that supported their governance. The rapid territorial expansion of the empire in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was accompanied by an era of economic prosperity that resulted from a steady increase in revenue.

The two financial geniuses under Akbar — Muzaffar Khan and Raja Todar Mal — formulated sound financial policies and introduced extensive reforms that resulted in noticeable economic prosperity. Whereas Muzaffar Khan abolished the 'jama-i-raqami' and replaced it with 'Jama hal-i-hasil' which not only checked corruption but was also a more rational form of assessment, Raja Todar Mal suggested the conversion of jagir lands to Khalisa lands and placing them under

government officers rather than the assignees. He evolved a system of revenue assessment that drew a balance between the demands of the state and the well-being of the subjects. He also systemized and centralized the revenue administration of the empire. Sadullah Khan, known for his extensive knowledge of business and finance, established a new territorial unit called the 'Chakla' that not only streamlined provincial administration but also helped in increasing revenue. The contribution of these prime ministers in restructuring the revenue system that operated jointly with the system of jagirs left an enduring impact on the rural society in North India.

Since the Mughal nobility was not tied to the land, their jagirs being transferable, they did not isolate themselves from the commercial world and were open to lucrative economic enterprises. The awareness of possibilities of economic growth through trade and commercial activity was heightened with the conquest of Gujrat in 1572 A.D. Since the state placed few constraints on economic activity and offered incentives to foster trade at all levels, the royalty and nobility participated in commercial activities particularly sea-borne trade.[1] However, initially all trading activities were linked with their religious beliefs.[2]

Asaf Khan and Mir Jumla indulged in large-scale trading activities through the misuse of their political power and not because they were qualified for the task. However, there is documented evidence that Sadullah Khan while indulging in private trade himself always watched the interests of the merchant community. Mir Jumla whose commercial activities offer the most noteworthy example of business investments of a Mughal *Wazir* indulged in dubious practices as often

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1 Satish Chandra, Essays On Medieval Indian History, O.U.P., 2003, p.234.
2 T.R.D'Souza, "Haj Without Spice, Politics of Religion between Akbar and the Portugese" in Iqtadar Alam Khan, ed., Akbar and His age, p. 106.

the capital invested by him came partly from the revenue resources of the empire. When senior officials like him cornered the market and created monopolies by using their official positions, it had a negative impact on trade and economy. Jafar Khan and Asad Khan also did not isolate themselves from the commercial world and were often the link between the Mughal emperor and the Europeans for trading sanctions. However, this often offered opportunities for personal monetary benefits.

While the participation of Mughal *Wazirs* in commercial enterprises, to further their own economic interests through misuse of power, hindered the free growth of economic activity, it was also responsible for the capture of internal and external trade by the Europeans. Nevertheless it opened the doors of the Mughal elite to European socio-cultural influences and led to greater cooperation between them.

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are distinguished by large scale urbanization[1], a direct outcome of the political stability and economic prosperity brought about by the Mughals. The role of Mughal nobility in promoting urban growth is quite understandable as very often the morphology of urban life was determined by the settlement patterns of the aristocracy who invested a substantial part of their income in the infrastructure that led to urbanization. Although the motivation behind such endeavours was administrative convenience it did indirectly boost the economy and brought about urban expansion.

The names of some Mughal prime ministers are associated with the revival of older established cities, the addition of few new cities and the building of an impressive array of monuments in some cities in North India. Munim Khan's role in boosting Jaunpur as an important

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1 R. Ramachandran, Urbanization and Urban Systems in India, O.U.P., 2000, p. 53.

centre which thrived on account of its trade, karkhanas and bazaars is noteworthy. The bridge over the river Gomti is the most important legacy of Munim Khan. There is substantial evidence to prove that Todar Mal was instrumental in the revival of Banaras as an important centre of learning. Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan, apart from founding the town of Jahangirpura in Khandesh built a number of mosques, baths and gardens. Sadullah Khan's name is associated with the foundation of Jama Masjid, the largest congregational mosque in India. He also built a 'Chauk' (square) which came to be known as chauk Sadullah Khan at Shahjahanabad.

It is surprising that Mughal nobility, including prime ministers, who set up Karkhanas for manufacturing rare articles of luxury did not respond positively to the innovations brought about as a result of European contacts. Although printing activity was introduced in India by this time, it did not arouse any curiosity in Fathullah Shirazi, a great noble in Akbar's court. Shah Jahan's *Wazir*, Sadullah Khan, famous for his literary accomplishments also refused to accept the printed theological refutation of an Islamic work which was brought to Shah Jahan's court in 1651 A.D.[1] It proved the fact that though the ruling classes evinced interest in use of articles of convenience and luxury, rational thinking and desire for acquiring technical know-how was missing.

Mughal emperors were known for their grandeur and opulence, a tradition followed by the aristocracy who emulated the ostentatious style of the royalty to the extent that their resources permitted them. Some Mughal prime ministers were also great admirers of beauty and had an eye for artistic talent. Possessing great wealth, these grandees were highly visible figures who apart from leading luxurious lives also

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1 E.Maclagan, The Jesiuts and the Great Mogul,, London, 1932, pp. 208-209.

spent their wealth on a whole lot of constructive work. They appreciated and encouraged various forms of art by patronizing artists, craftsmen and scholars who found lucrative employment with them. Moreover, scholars and men of talent were always needed to serve as civil officers and cater to the educational needs of the ever expanding empire.[1]

Prime ministers enriched the socio-cultural ethos in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by financing madrasas, encouraging scholars, musicians, astrologers and artisans who looked up to them for patronage. Prime ministers like Bairam Khan, Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan, Afzal Khan and Sadullah Khan furthered the cause of literary activity and scholarship during this period. Abdur Rahim's name stands out as a great linguist and one of the most celebrated poets of Hindi literature. Persian and Sanskrit sources of the time talk of a great cultural renaissance during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. On the one hand there was court patronage to Sanskrit and on the other Todar Mal, Prime Minister from 1582-89 A.D., persuaded his co-religionists to learn Persian, the language of their rulers and facilitated the possibility of achieving upward mobility in official hierarchy.

Men like Itmad-ud-Daulah and Asaf Khan had varied interests and often hosted lavish banquets and other gatherings where guests were offered a variety of music, dance, poetry and cuisine. Munim Khan, Abdur Rahim, Sadullah Khan were known to have built mosques and madrasas, while Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan, and Asaf Khan laid out the most exquisite gardens of the time.

The process of Mughal cultural transformation from Turko-Mongol robustness to Persian style, culture and ceremonialism which began during Humayun's stay in Persia was to some extent the result of prime ministerial office being held by men of Persian origin like

[1] I.H. Siddiqui, "Muslim Intellectual Life in Inda", in I.H.Siddique, ed., Medival India, Essays in Intellectual Thought and Culture, Manohar, 2003, p.88

Bairam Khan and his son Abdur Rahim, Itmad-ud-Daulah and Asaf Khan,[1] apart from the influence of Persian wives of Mughal emperors like Maham Begum, Hamida Bano Begum, Nur Jahan and Mumtaz Mahal. This is evident from the fact that while Babur wrote in Turki which was his mother tongue, Jahangir wrote in Persian, but could write in Turki as well. However, Shah Jahan refused to learn the language as a child which came to be considered as a crude and uncouth one.

Aurangzeb's indifference to fine arts in general and painting in particular was partly responsible for the decline of these arts among the nobility who no longer had a model patron in the Mughal emperor. Nevertheless, the tradition did not come to an end and the Mughal style largely influenced later schools of painting at the regional level.

Apart from the valuable contribution made by the prime ministers in various facets of life, they were after all human beings who got involved in court politics and conspiracies. By virtue of his position, the Prime Minister had to deal with the emperor on one hand and the common man on the other and an equally important third element, the other members of the nobility. Most of them were efficient, hardworking and loyal to their masters but conscious of the fact that despite the absolute powers of the emperor, their opinions and interests also played a significant role in formulation of state policies, they tended to become ambitious. Aware of possibilities and opportunities for themselves and certain islamic perceptions like theoretic equality of men as well as an absence of a well defined law of succession, they often attempted to go beyond their jurisdiction. The careers of Nizamuddin Khalifa, Bairam Khan, Aziz Koka and Asaf Khan indicate

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1 Albraham Eraly, The Last Spring, The Lives and Times of the Great Mughals, Viking, New Delhi, 1997, p. 302.

the trend. Very often when they formed a group or sided with a particular one at any time, they did so not on principles but purely on the basis of their judgement as to how they would benefit by adopting a particular course of action. Personal rivalries and jealousies very often led them to indulge in politics to crush any possible challenge to their position, a trend that assumed dangerous proportions in the post-Aurangzeb period when by virtue of substantial patronage and power, the office of the *Wazir* became an object of intrigue among the nobility.[1]

Along with the regression of medieval culture and civilization in the early eighteenth century, a subtle change is also visible in the values, social attitudes and intellectual capacity of the nobility in general.[2] Aurangzeb's prime ministers never enjoyed the independence, responsibility and the resources available to the earlier incumbents. Coupled with the lack of leisure amidst perpetual warfare this led to general decay of culture and scholarship in aristocratic circles. One cannot ignore the fact that in the changed circumstances of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the nobility also suffered tremendous financial deprivation as a result of losses in revenue. This to some extent would also explain their failure to offer patronage to innovations that were the result of european contact.

The record of the activities between 1526-1707 A.D. endorses the fact that the Mughal empire benefitted tremendously from the services provided by their prime ministers. Even when the negative aspect is taken into account there is much by way of positive and constructive contribution to be appreciated in retrospect. Their productive input in enriching the Mughal state, its economy and culture needs to be acknowledged and applauded.

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[1] Satish Chandra, Parties and Politics of the Mughal Court, p. 102.

[2] Jadunath Sarkar, "Condition of the People in Aurangzib's Reign" in Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subramanyam, ed., The Mughal State, O.U.P., New Delhi, 2003, p. 314.

Finally, some passing comparisons of the Mughal prime ministers with their ancient and early medieval counterparts may not seem out of place here. The most important Prime Minister of the ancient period, Kautilya, as regent and guardian of Chandra Gupta Maurya, was astute enough not to over reach himself realising the potential and qualities of the would be monarch Chandra Gupta Maurya, unlike Bairam Khan who dominated the first four years of Akbar's reign. Kautilya who was instrumental in overthrowing the Nandas and placing Chandra Gupta Maurya on the throne believed in "the minister investing himself with powers of sovereignty only in the event of the king's demise". [1]

Mughal prime ministers compare favourably with their counterparts during the Sultanat period. Domestic history of the early Turkish empire of Delhi centres around the activities of the nobility especially the prime ministers to keep the strings of administration in their hands; where some like Balban pressed by their inordinate ambition, forced the crown to surrender maximum privileges to them. Whereas perpetual conflict between the crown and the nobility for possession of authority was a permanent feature of the thirteenth century, the Mughal prime minsiters never tried to usurp the throne for themselves though they did try to manipulate and control succession within the ruling dynasty itself.

The problem of *Wizarat* in post-Aurangzeb period dominated the political scenario of the eighteenth century culminating in the prime ministers of the weaker Mughals establishing their own regional dynasties; while under the Marathas they went a step further and supplanted the ruler.

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1 Kautilya, Arthasasthra, Eng. Trans. R. Shama Shastri, p. 284. Kautilya is also said to have remarked, "It is verily the duty of the King to appoint ministers".

In the contemporary West, unlike medieval India, the system of feudalism helped the prime ministers along with the nobility to restrict the king leading to the establishment of constitutional monarchies of which Great Britain is the most conspicuous example.

The Mughal Prime Minister with all his multifarious talent was essentially a part of a bureaucratic setup where as an advisor he could only influence rather than shape the empire's polity. He could make a more substantial contribution to conquest and consolidation, strengthening the economic structure and steering the empire towards cultural progress.

APPENDIX

A. Mansabs granted to Prime Ministers by Akbar

Name and Title	Mansab	Year	Source
Bairam Khan Khan-i-Khanan			
Munim Khan Khan-i-Khanan	5000	1573	Massir-ul-Umara Vol. II, Pt. I , p. 291
Muzaffar Khan Turbati Jumlat-ul-Mulk	5000	1573	Maasir-ul-Umara VOl. II, Pt. 1, p. 361.
Ṛaja Todar Mal	4000	1574	Maasir-ul-Umara Vol.II, Pt. 2, p. 951
Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan	5000	1583	Akbar Nama Vol. III, p. 643; Maasir-ul-Umara Vol. I, p. 52
Mirza Aziz Koka Khan-i-Azam	5000	1581	Maasir-ul-Umara Vol. I, p. 323.

B. Mansabs granted to Prime Ministers by Jahangir

Name and Title	Mansab	Year	Source
Sharif Khan Amir-ul-Umara	5000	1606	Maasir-ul-Umara Vol. II, Pt. 2, p. 817
Mirza Ghias Beg Itmad-ud-Daulah	6000	1611	Maasir-ul-Umara Vol. II, Pt. 2, p. 1075
Abul Hasan Asaf Khan	7000/7000	1627	Maasir-ul-Umara Vol. I, p. 289

C. Mansabs granted to Prime Ministers by Shah Jahan

Name and Title	Mansab	Year	Source
Asaf Khan Yamin-ud-Daulah	9000/9000	1628	Massir-ul-Umara Vol. I Pt. I p. 292.
Afzal Khan	7000	1640	Maasir-ul-Umara Vol.I, Pt. 1, p. 153
Islam Khan	7000/7000	1648	Maasir-ul-Umara Vol. I, p. 695
Sadullah Khan	7000/7000	1650	Maasir-ul-Umara Vol. II, Pt. 2, p. 641
Muhammad Saeed Muazzam Khan Mir Jumla	6000/6000	1656	Maasir-ul-Umara Vol. II, pt. 1, p. 191

D. Mansabs granted to Prime Ministers by Aurangzeb

Name and Title	Mansab	Year	Source
Muazzam Khan (Mir Jumla)	7000/7000	1657	Maasir-ul-Umara Vol I, Pt. 1, p. 194
Jafar Khan Umdat-ul-Mulk	6000/6000	1665	Maasir-ul-Umara Vol. I, p. 722
Asad Khan Asaf-ud-Daulah Jumdat-ul-Mulk	7000/7000	1686	Maasir-ul-Umara Vol. I, p. 272

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